



THORNGAL

City of the Lost God

ROSINSKI - VAN HAMME



Van Hamme

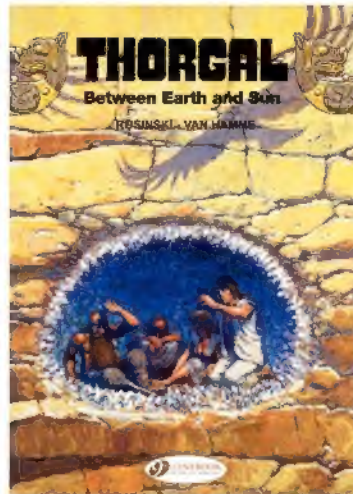
ROSINSKI-VAN HAMME

THORCAL

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With the authors' consent, and in order not to upset our more sensitive readers, certain illustrations of this edition of *Thorgal* have been modified.
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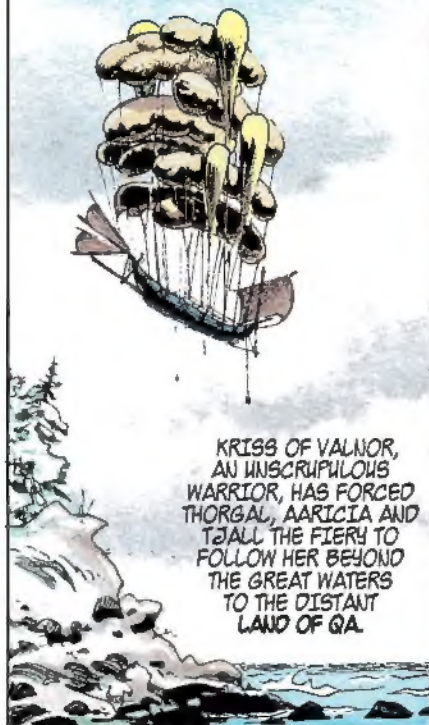
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WHAT HAPPENED IN THE PREVIOUS EPISODES—THE LAND OF QA, THE EYES OF TANATLOC?



KRISS OF VALNOR, AN UNSCRUPULOUS WARRIOR, HAS FORCED THORGAL, AARICIA AND TJALL THE FIERY TO FOLLOW HER BEYOND THE GREAT WATERS TO THE DISTANT LAND OF QA.

THEIR MISSION: TO RETRIEVE THE MAGICAL HEADPIECE OF OGOTAI, A GOD WHO EMERGED FROM THE SEA AND WHO NOW DREAMS OF RULING THE WORLD IN HIS BLOOD-THIRSTY MADNESS.



TO DO THAT, THEY NEED TO REACH MAHAXATL, OGOTAI'S SECRET CITY THAT WAS CREATED IN THE HEART OF AN IMPENETRABLE VIRGIN FOREST.

AS A SECURITY FOR OUR FRIENDS, ARGUN TREE FOOT AND YOUNG JOLAN ARE HELD HOSTAGE WITH THE XINJIN, THE LAST PEOPLE IN THE LAND OF QA TO RESIST THE OGOTAI HORDES.



IT WAS HERE THAT TANATLOC, THE OLD GOD PROTECTOR OF THE XINJIN, EXPLAINED TO JOLAN THE NATURE OF THE STRANGE POWERS THAT THE CHILD POSSESSED.



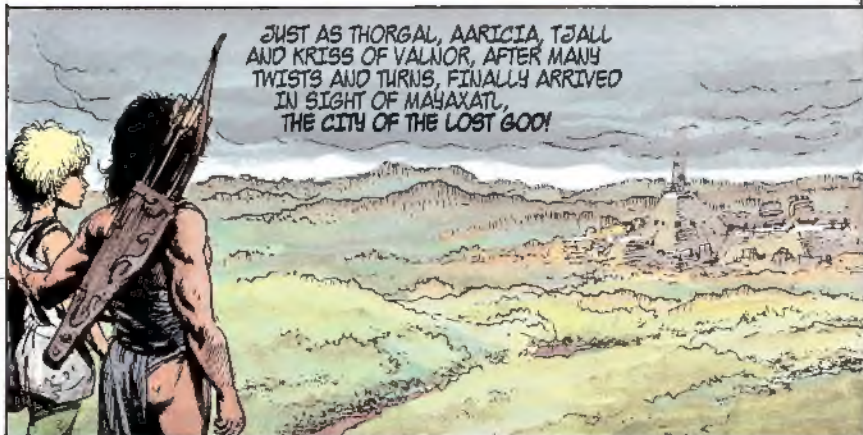
BUT WHILE THE QUARTET WAS MAKING ITS WAY THROUGH THE FORBIDDEN TERRITORIES GUARDED BY THE STRANGE GODDESS WITH NO NAME...

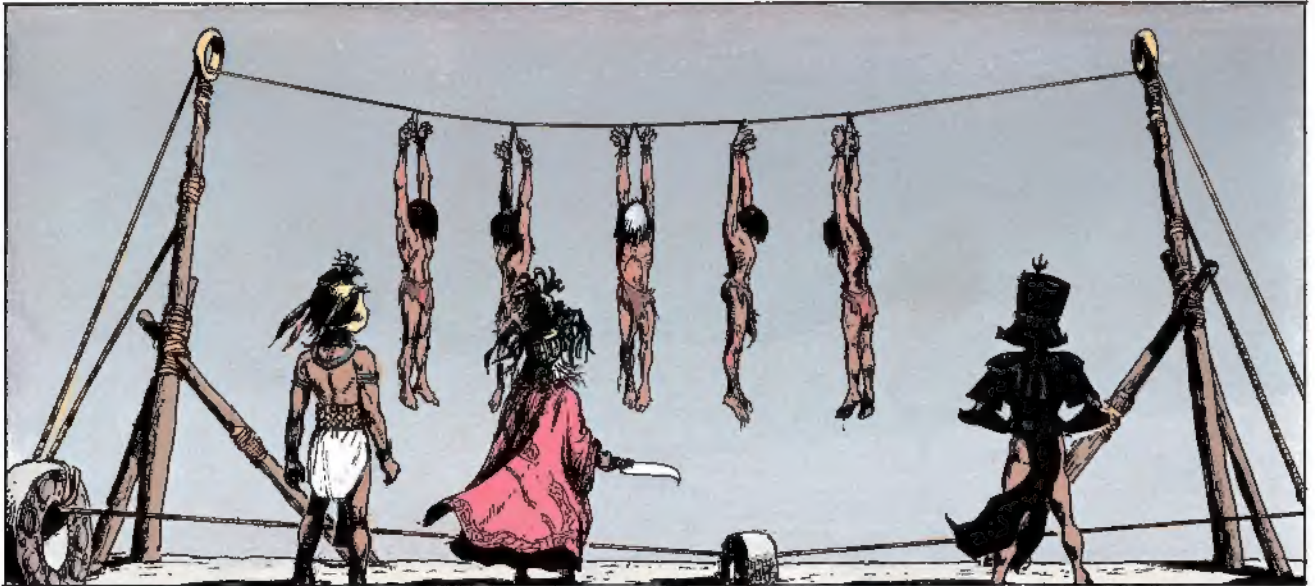


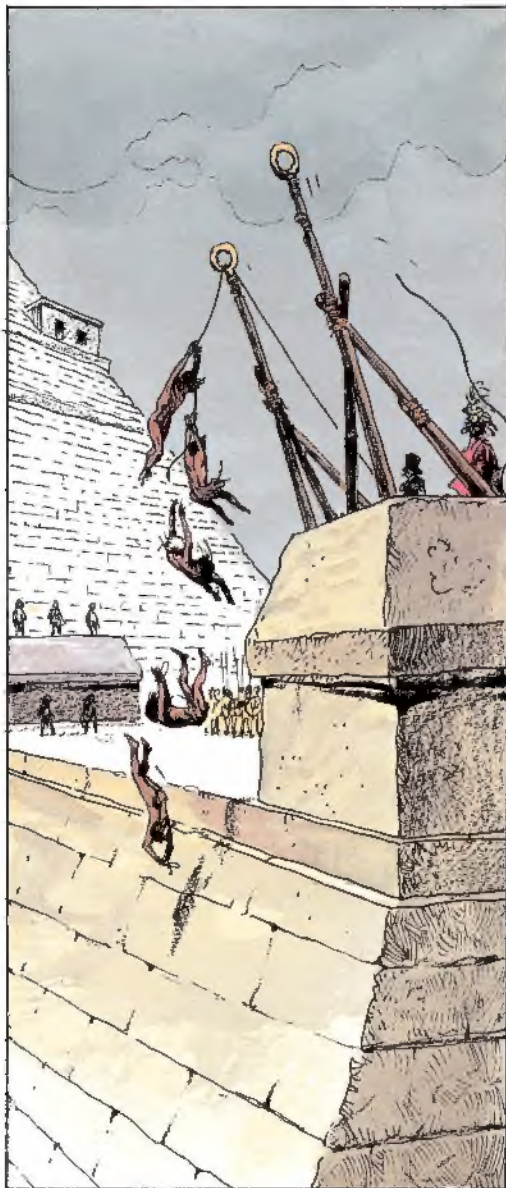
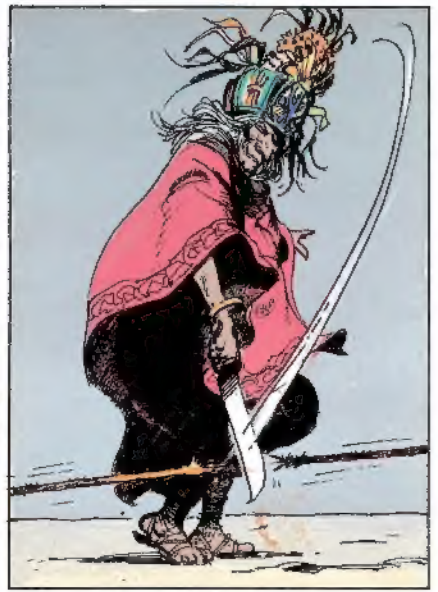
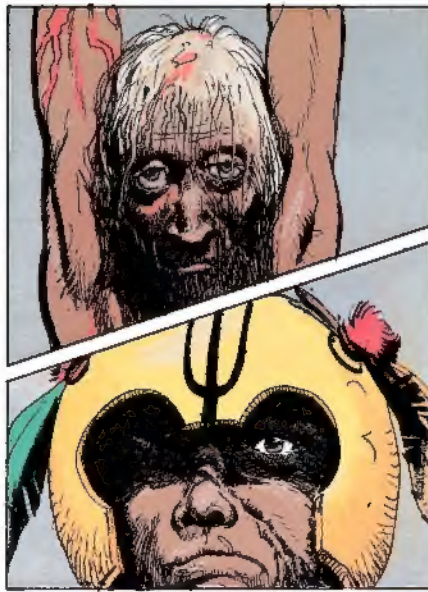
...TANATLOC DIED AND JOLAN BECAME THE NEW GOD OF THE XINJIN UNDER THE NAME HURUKAN...

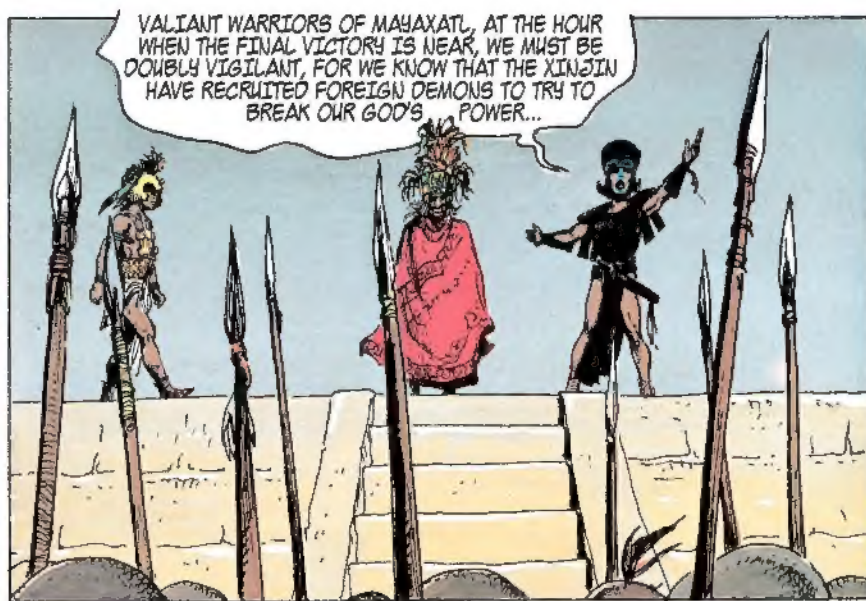


JUST AS THORGAL, AARICIA, TJALL AND KRISS OF VALNOR, AFTER MANY TWISTS AND TURNS, FINALLY ARRIVED IN SIGHT OF MAHAXATL, THE CITY OF THE LOST GOD!

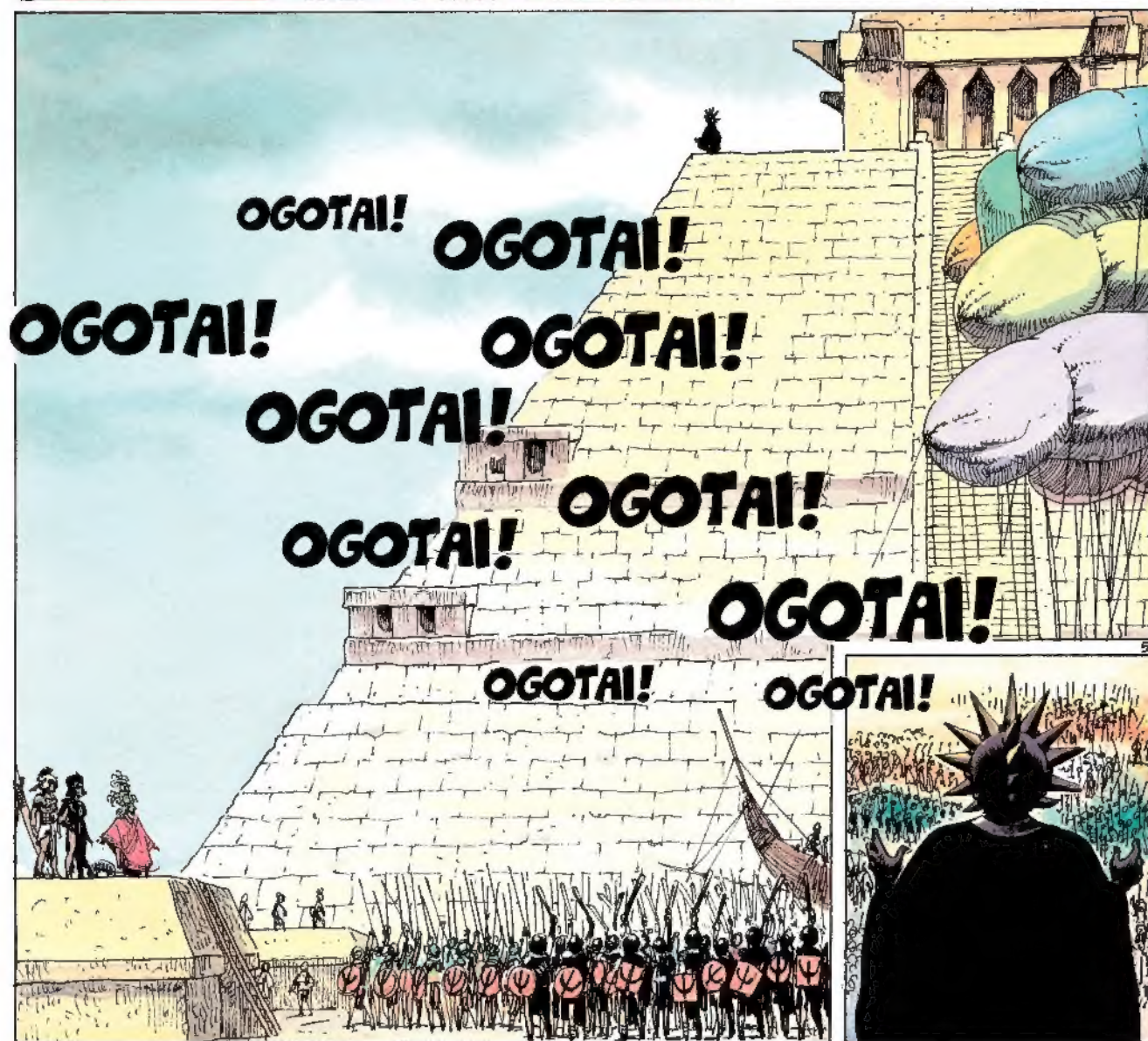


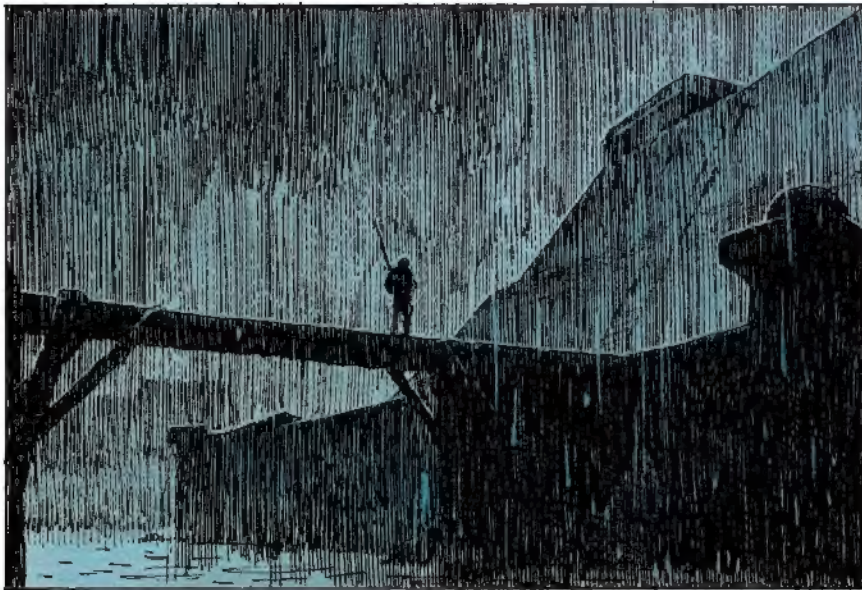






ETERNAL LIFE TO YOU, OH OGOTAI,
MAY YOUR NAME FINALLY SHINE
OVER ALL THE LIVING WORLD!
OGOTAI! OGOTAI!
OGOTAI!





HALT! WHO GOES THERE?!



OH, IT... IT'S YOU, LORD. HOW... YOU'RE GOING TO THE LOWER TOWN?



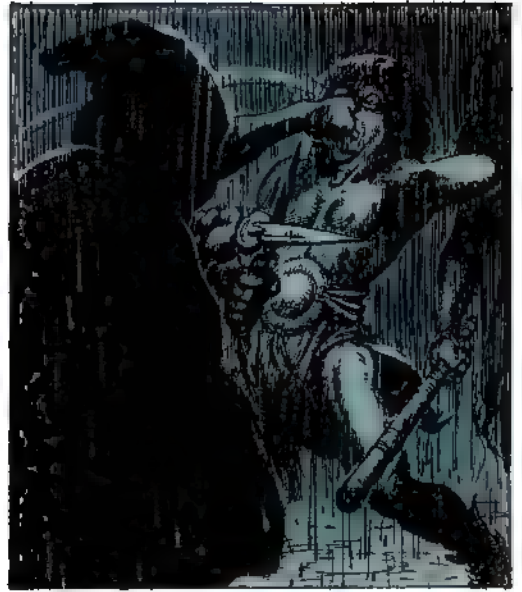
IS THERE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?

ERM, NO, BUT... WITHOUT AN ESCORT, IT'S NOT SAFE...



DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT THAT, SOLDIER. STAY ON GUARD.







THEY'RE HERE, LORD. I'VE HIDDEN THEM IN MY CELLAR AND I'VE FED THEM.

ARE YOU SURE IT'S THEM?

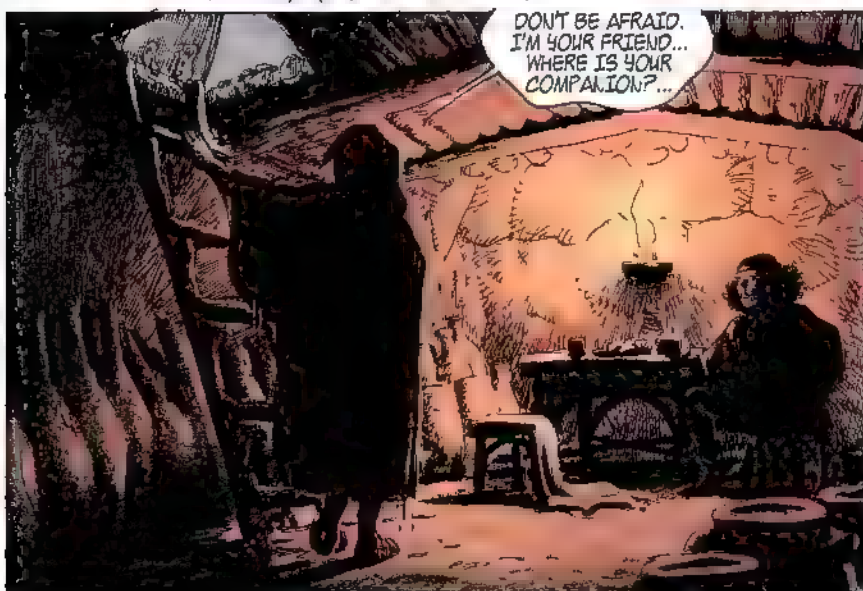


THEY'RE FOREIGNERS FROM A RACE I'VE NEVER SEEN. A MAN AND A WOMAN, AND THEY HAD THE RING. BUT DO BE CAREFUL: THEY DON'T SEEM VERY EASY TO DEAL WITH.



THAT'S GOOD. CLOSE THE TRAPDOOR AND MAKE SURE NONE OF THOSE DRUNKEN SOLDIERS COMES SNIFFLING ABOUT IN HERE. YOUR LIFE AND MINE DEPEND ON IT.

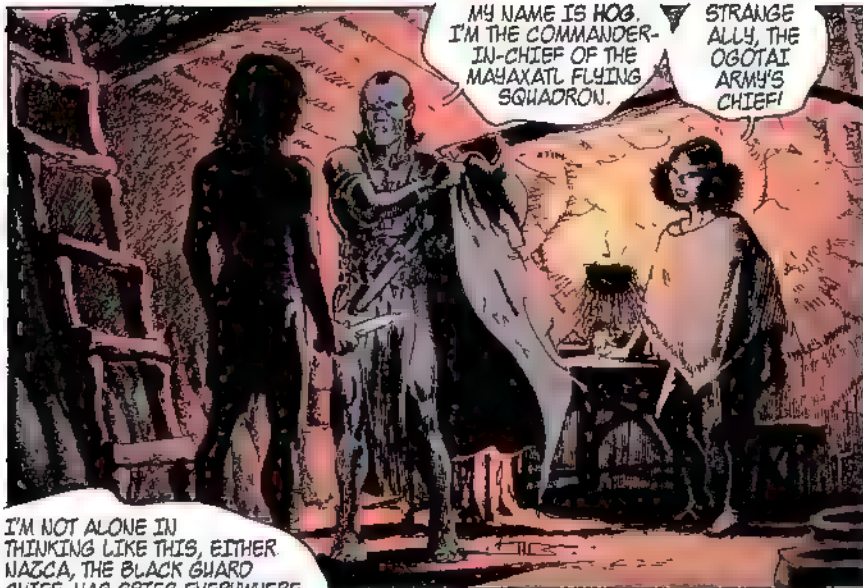
I... I'LL KEEP A CLOSE WATCH, LORD; YOU CAN COUNT ON ME.



DON'T BE AFRAID. I'M YOUR FRIEND... WHERE IS YOUR COMPANION?...



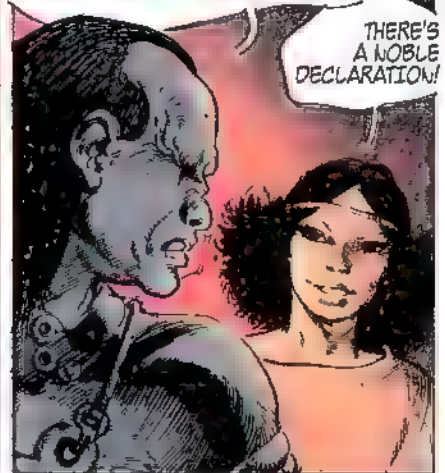
HERE. CAN YOU TELL US WHO THIS "FRIEND" IS?



MY NAME IS HOG. I'M THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE MAYAXATL FLYING SQUADRON.

STRANGE ALLY, THE OGOTAI ARMY'S CHIEF!

AND YET IT IS SO. I'M A CHAAM AND A WARRIOR, AND THE XINJIN ARE MY ENEMIES. BUT I PREFER TO ALLY WITH THEM RATHER THAN TO SEE OGOTAI AND HIS CURSED PRIEST'S BLOODY TYRANNY CONTINUE.



THERE'S A NOBLE DECLARATION!

I'M NOT ALONE IN THINKING LIKE THIS, EITHER. NAZCA, THE BLACK GUARD CHIEF, HAS SPIES EVERYWHERE. EVEN THIS MORNING, FIVE OF OUR OWN PAID IN AN ATROCIOUS WAY FOR THEIR DESIRE TO FIND PEACE. ONE OF THEM WAS ONE OF MY OLDEST FRIENDS.



I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING, AS THERE'S ONLY A HANDFUL OF US. THE GREAT MASS OF MAYAXATL WARRIORS IS COMPLETELY FANATICISED BY OGOTAI. NOT TO MENTION THE TERROR THAT OUR PRIESTS AND THE BLACK GUARD INSPIRE.

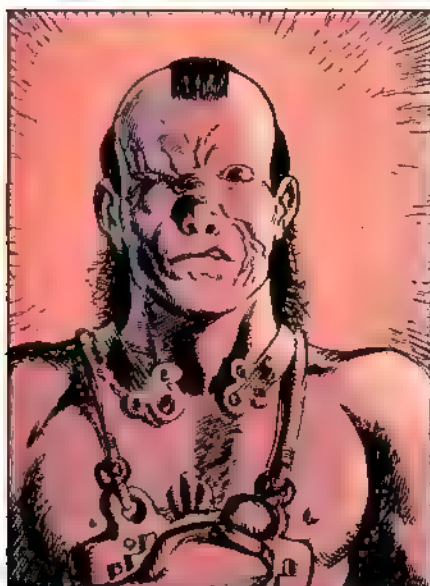
BASICALLY, YOU'RE SCARED



WHAT DID YOU DARE TO SAY!?



THAT UNDER YOUR ROCK-HARD EXTERIOR, YOU'RE AFRAID TO CONFRONT YOUR SUPPOSED GOD OPENLY. AND THAT'S ACTUALLY WHY WE'RE HERE.



YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, WOMAN. OGOTAI HAS SUPERHUMAN POWERS. HE CAN MAKE THINGS APPEAR AND DISAPPEAR, KILL FROM A DISTANCE, READ MINDS.



BAH, LEGENDS FOR COWARDS. YOUR GOD FROM THE SEA IS JUST A WASHED-UP CASTAWAY WHO'S MORE EVIL THAN YOU, THAT'S ALL.

I'VE SEEN HIM DO THESE THINGS. WE'VE ALL SEEN HIM. OGOTAI IS INVINCIBLE!

AND HE'S NOT JUST A SIMPLE CASTAWAY. HE TOLD US THAT HE FELL INTO THE SEA WHEN HE CAME FROM THE STARS ON BOARD HIS FLYING SHIP. AND WE BELIEVED HIM.

THE STARS!...



YES, THE STARS, WHERE THE GODS LIVE. IT'S TRUE, I'LL ADMIT IT: HE SCARES ME. AND YOU, TOO, YOU'LL BE SCARED WHEN THE MOMENT TO CONFRONT HIM ARISES.



IF YOU MAKE IT THAT FAR THERE ARE ONLY TWO OF YOU, AND APART FROM YOUR FISTS, YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE ANY WEAPONS.

FOR MORE SECURITY, WE'VE LEFT OUR COMPANIONS OUTSIDE THE TOWN.



AS FOR OUR WEAPONS, THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE OF A BURDEN THAN USEFUL IN GETTING US HERE UNNOTICED.



INSTEAD OF TRYING TO DISCOURAGE US, WHY DON'T YOU EXPLAIN HOW TO GET INTO OGOTAI'S PALACE...

THAT WOULD BE DIFFICULT...

THE PALACE SITS ON TOP OF THE GREAT PYRAMID, WHICH IS FORBIDDEN TO EVERYONE BUT THE PRIESTS AND THE BLACK GUARD. EVEN I CAN ONLY CLIMB THE STAIRS ON DAYS OF GREAT SACRIFICES

GREAT SACRIFICES?



ONCE PER MOON. HUNDREDS OF PRISONERS, SLAVES AND CONVICTS ARE STRUNG UP BY THE PRIESTS FOR OGOTAI'S HIGHEST GLORY. THE NEXT SACRIFICE WILL TAKE PLACE IN FOUR DAYS.

CHARMING CUSTOM. AND THE PALACE ITSELF?



ACCESS IS GUARDED DAY AND NIGHT, AND EVEN THE PRIESTS DON'T DARE TO GO IN. THEY SAY THAT ITS CORRIDORS ARE A LABYRINTH LITTERED WITH MONSTROUS TRAPS THAT NOBODY, EXCEPT OGOTAI, HAS THE KEY TO.



WE HAVE TO FIND THIS KEY...

JUST LIKE WE'LL FIND A WAY OUT AFTER SNATCHING THAT FAMOUS HEADPIECE.



I ADMIRE YOUR OPTIMISM AND YOUR RECKLESSNESS. BUT THERE'S A DETAIL THAT IT'S TIME YOU BOTH KNEW ABOUT...

YOU WEREN'T SENT HERE TO GET HOLD OF THAT HEADPIECE. YOUR REAL MISSION IS TO KILL OGOTAI!





WHAT!?!

WAIT
A SECOND...
THAT WASN'T
IN THE
CONTRACT.

IT WAS
ALWAYS THE
PLAN. YOU
JUST DIDN'T
KNOW IT.



VARTAY, THE XINJIN HIGH REGENT,
WAS AFRAID THAT YOU'D REFUSE
THE MISSION IF YOU KNEW THE
REAL GOAL. WHEREAS NOW,
YOU CAN'T GO BACK.

THAT OLD
HYPOCRITE!
SHOWS HE DIDN'T
KNOW ME...



I'M INDIFFERENT TO
KILLING, BUT KILLING
A GOD... THAT COMES
WITH A PRICE.

YOU WILL BE
PAID BEYOND
YOUR WILDEST
DREAMS.



THE XINJIN HAVE PROMISED A
FULL CHARIOT OF GOLD IF YOU
SUCCEED. I'LL ADD A SECOND.
IT WILL BE A SMALL PRICE TO
PAY FOR THE DELIVERANCE
OF MY PEOPLE.

AT LEAST
THAT'S A LANGUAGE
THAT I UNDERSTAND,
SCAR FACE.



BUT YOU'RE STILL A
LONG WAY FROM HAVING
EARNED THAT GOLD.
YOUR CHANCES OF
SUCCESS ARE VERY
SLENDER.

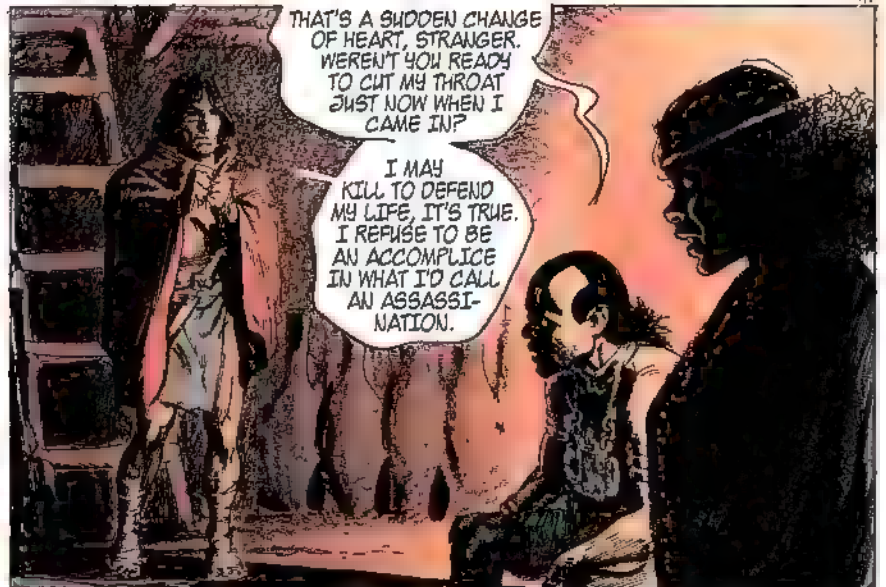
THAT'LL
BE OUR
BUSINESS.

YOURS
PERHAPS, BUT
NOT MINE...



I DON'T FEEL LIKE I HAVE
THE SAME BOUNTY-HUNTER
SOUL AS YOU, AND
BESIDES, I'VE HAD
ENOUGH OF THIS TALE
YOU'VE DRAGGED
ME THROUGH. I'M
PULLING OUT OF
THE GAME.

??



THAT'S A SUDDEN CHANGE
OF HEART, STRANGER.
WEREN'T YOU READY
TO CUT MY THROAT
JUST NOW WHEN I
CAME IN?

I MAY
KILL TO DEFEND
MY LIFE, IT'S TRUE.
I REFUSE TO BE
AN ACCOMPLICE
IN WHAT I'D CALL
AN ASSASSI-
NATION.

MAN OR GOD, OGOTAI IS A DANGEROUS MONSTER. BLOODTHIRSTY MANIAC. BY GETTING RID OF HIM, YOU'LL SAVE A WHOLE COUNTRY FROM DESTRUCTION.

SORRY, HOG, BUT MY DECISION HAS BEEN MADE...

FIGURE IT OUT WITHOUT ME. FAREWELL.

HAVEN'T YOU FORGOTTEN SOMETHING, DEAR THORGAL?

I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN ANYTHING, VIPER. I UNDERSTOOD LONG AGO THAT JOLAN AND TREE FOOT COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN WITH THE XINJIN. AND I CAN MAKE DO WITHOUT YOU TO FIND THEM.

YOU... YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS, I SWEAR!

BE CAREFUL, STRANGER. IF YOU REFUSE TO BE MY ALLY, YOU WON'T LEAVE MAHAXATL ALIVE.

WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT...



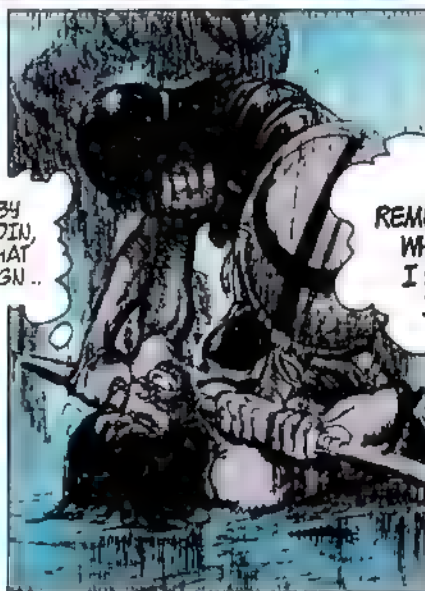
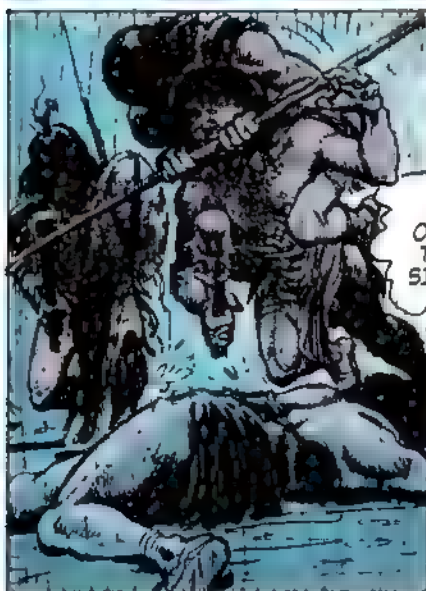
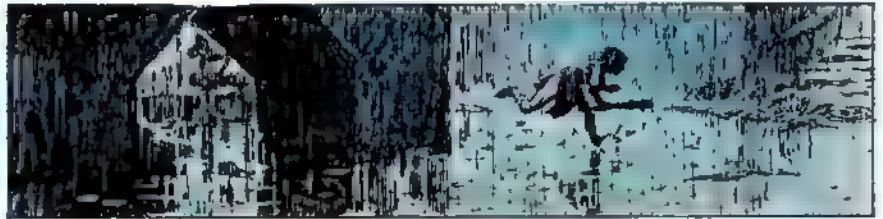
STOP THAT MAN! HE'S ONE OF
THE FOREIGN DEMONS SENT BY
THE XINJIN!





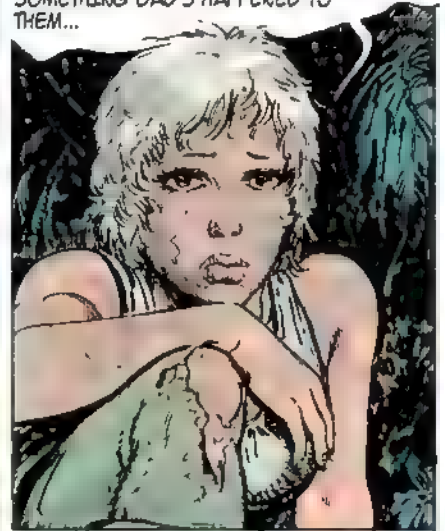
HE KNOWS TOO MUCH; WE
HAVE TO CATCH HIM AT
ANY COST. IF HE WAS EVER
ARRESTED BY THE BLACK
GUARD, IT WOULD BE A
CATASTROPHE!







I COULDN'T SLEEP ALL NIGHT. WHY ARE THEY NOT BACK YET, TJALL? I'M SURE SOMETHING BAD'S HAPPENED TO THEM...



I'M SCARED, TJALL. I WANT THORGAL TO BE BACK, TO LEAVE THIS AWFUL COUNTRY, FIND JOLAN AND YOUR UNCLE AND FINALLY GO HOME. I WANT TO BE ABLE TO FORGET THIS FEELING OF ANGUISH....

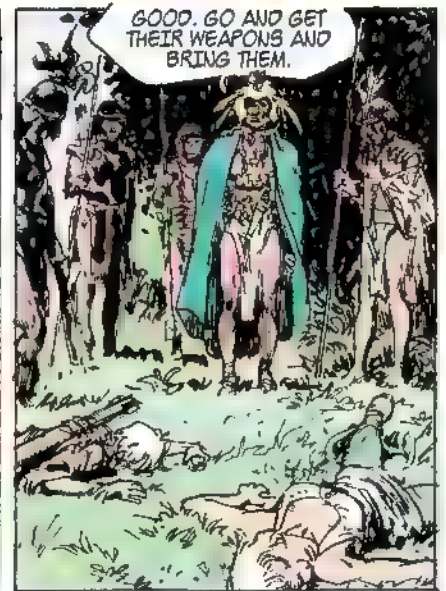


I'D LIKE TO BE ABLE TO FORGET TOO, AARICIA. TO FORGET THAT I BETRAYED YOU, THAT I LOST YOUR TRUST AND FRIENDSHIP FOREVER.* BUT, THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT ARE JUST IMPOSSIBLE TO

TJALL!...



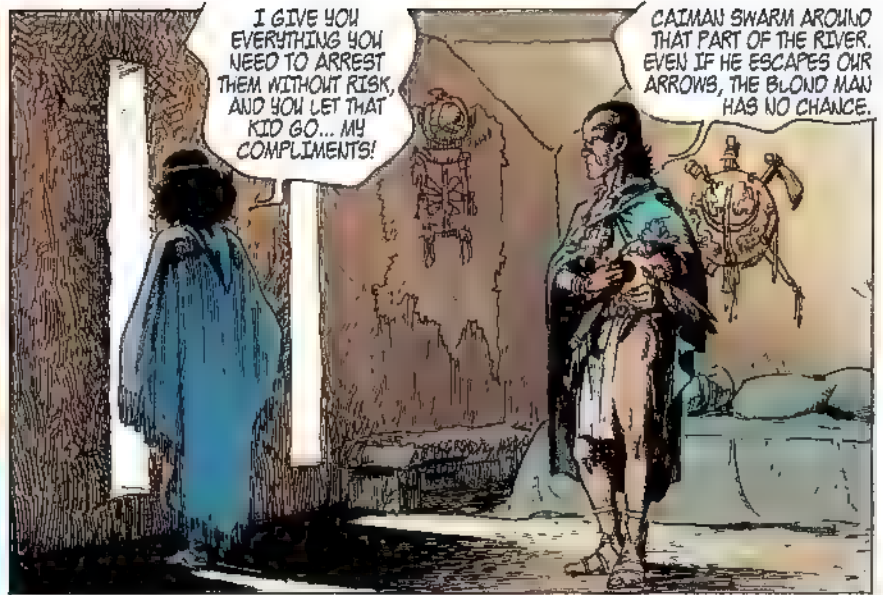
* SEE THE EYES OF TANATLOC.







YOUR MEN
ARE USELESS,
COMMANDER
HOG!



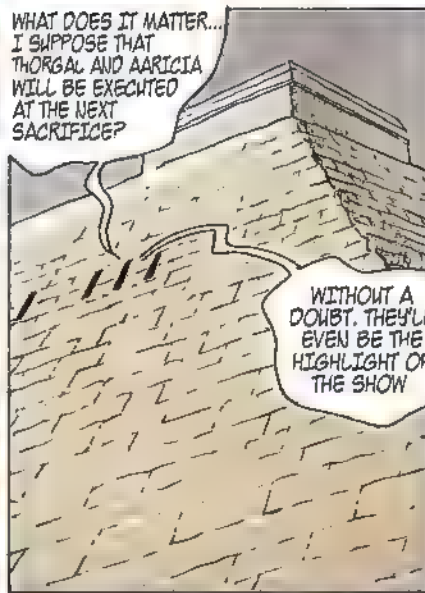
I GIVE YOU
EVERYTHING YOU
NEED TO ARREST
THEM WITHOUT RISK,
AND YOU LET THAT
KID GO... MY
COMPLIMENTS!

CAIMAN SWARM AROUND
THAT PART OF THE RIVER.
EVEN IF HE ESCAPES OUR
ARROWS, THE BLOND MAN
HAS NO CHANCE.



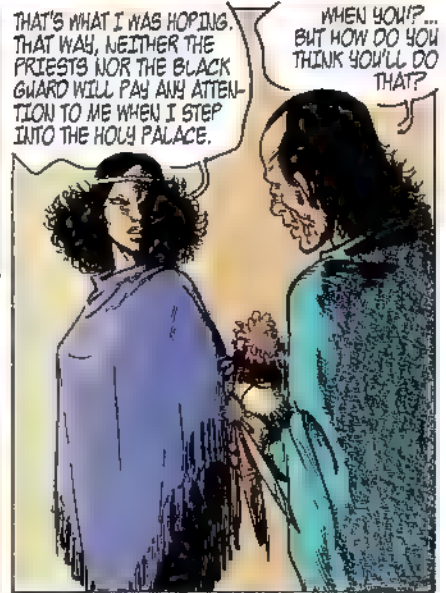
BUT I'M TRYING TO
UNDERSTAND, KRISS
OF VALNOR... THOSE
MEN AND THAT
WOMAN, WEREN'T
THEY YOUR FRIENDS?

LET'S JUST SAY
THAT I DON'T LIKE
IT WHEN MY FRIENDS
ABANDON ME. AND THAT
I HAVE AN OLD SCORE TO
SETTLE WITH THEM. STILL,
I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO
SEE THAT TRAITOR TOLL
DIE BEFORE MY EYES.



WHAT DOES IT MATTER...
I SUPPOSE THAT
THORGAL AND AARCIA
WILL BE EXECUTED
AT THE NEXT
SACRIFICE?

WITHOUT A
DOUBT. THEY'LL
EVEN BE THE
HIGHLIGHT OF
THE SHOW



THAT'S WHAT I WAS HOPING.
THAT WAY, NEITHER THE
PRIESTS NOR THE BLACK
GUARD WILL PAY ANY ATTEN-
TION TO ME WHEN I STEP
INTO THE HOLY PALACE.

WHEN YOU?...
BUT HOW DO YOU
THINK YOU'LL DO
THAT?

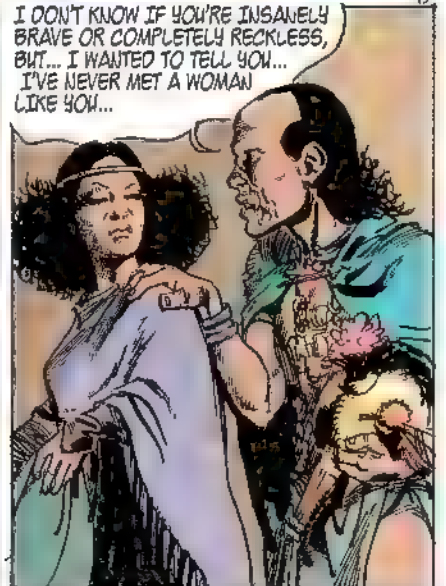


I'LL TELL YOU IN
GOOD TIME. NOW
LEAVE ME. I NEED
TO REGAIN MY
STRENGTH.

!?



KRISS...

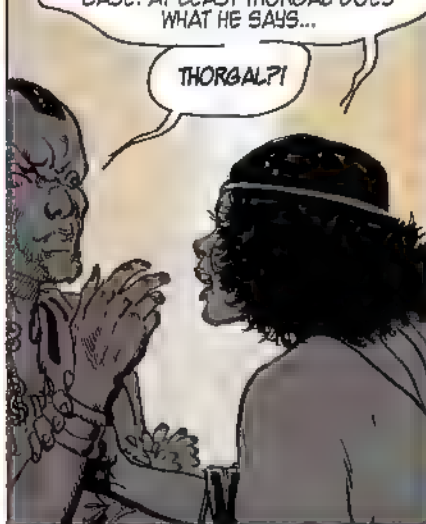


I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'RE INSANELY
BRAVE OR COMPLETELY RECKLESS,
BUT... I WANTED TO TELL YOU...
I'VE NEVER MET A WOMAN
LIKE YOU...

HANDS OFF, SCAR FACE! I'VE MET MORE MEN LIKE YOU THAN I CAN COUNT: VALIANT AND CHARMING, BUT ONLY IN WORDS...



BUT AS SOON AS IT'S TIME FOR ACTION, IT'S A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CASE. AT LEAST THORGAL DOES WHAT HE SAYS...



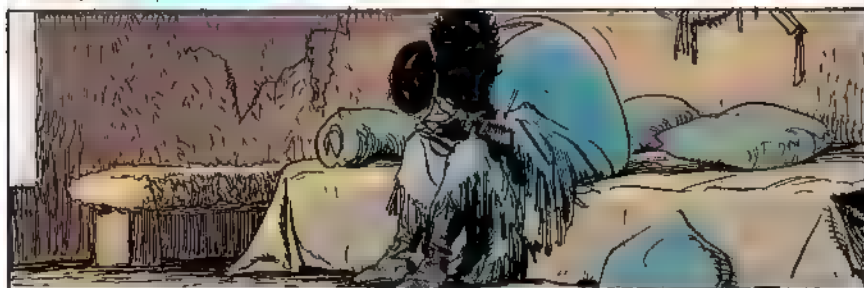
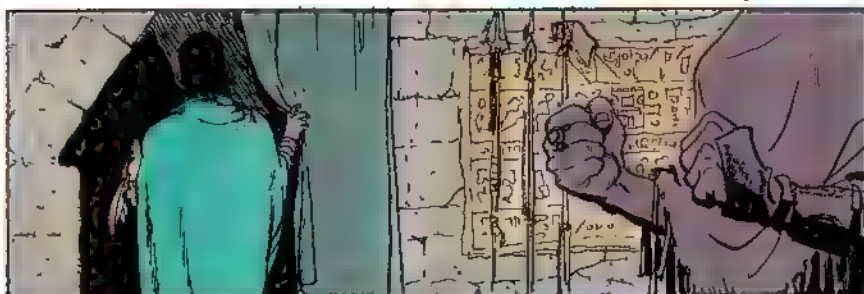
THORGAL?!

SO THAT'S THE EXPLANATION... THIS THORGAL, WHOM YOU PRETEND TO HATE AND WHOM YOU'RE SACRIFICING AS YOUR PLAN REQUIRES. IN REALITY, YOU ADMIRE HIM AND YOU'VE...



ENOUGH!

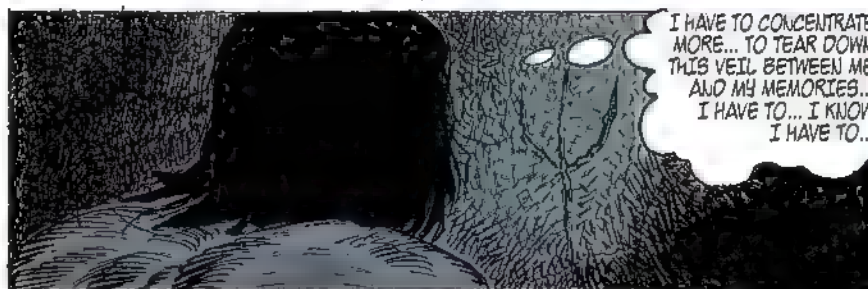
GET OUT, YOU ONE-EYED SLEAZE! GET YOUR RAVAGED FACE OUT OF MY SIGHT! GET OUT!



YOU WILL FORGET WHAT YOU JUST SAW, THORGAL. I WANT TO REMOVE ALL TRACES OF YOUR ORIGINS FROM YOUR MEMORY



I HAVE TO CONCENTRATE MORE... TO TEAR DOWN THIS VEIL BETWEEN ME AND MY MEMORIES... I HAVE TO... I KNOW I HAVE TO...

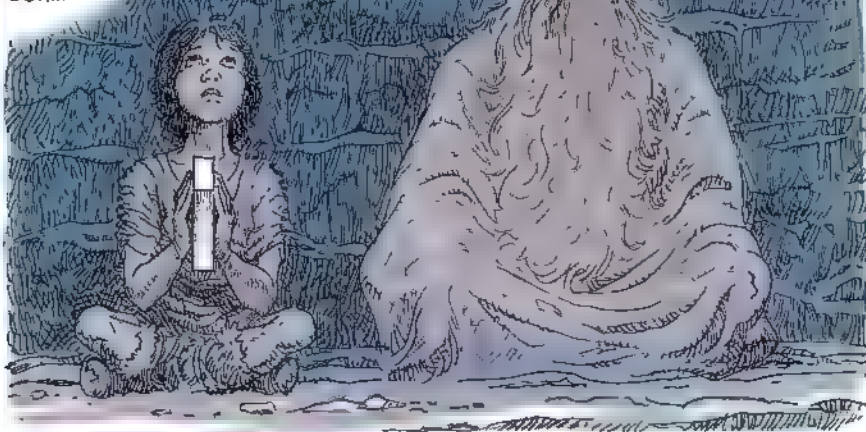


XARGOS! HIS NAME WAS XARGOS! I'M SURE OF IT! I WAS... I WAS 12 YEARS OLD, I THINK...*

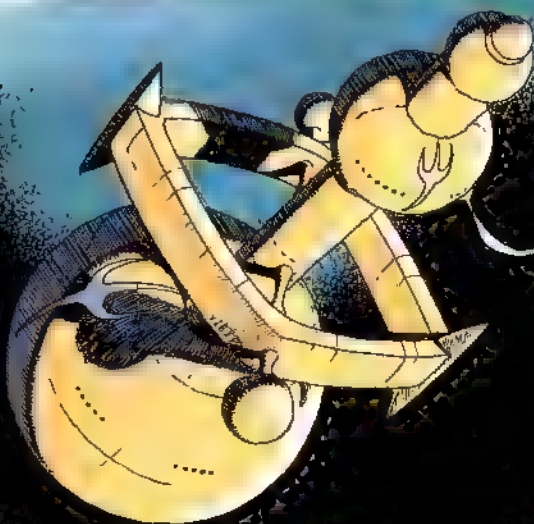


I WENT TO FIND HIM TO DISCOVER WHERE I WAS FROM... HE GAVE ME A MAGIC BOX...

LOOK AT THE STARS, THORGAL; THEY'LL TEACH YOU WHERE YOU CAME FROM.

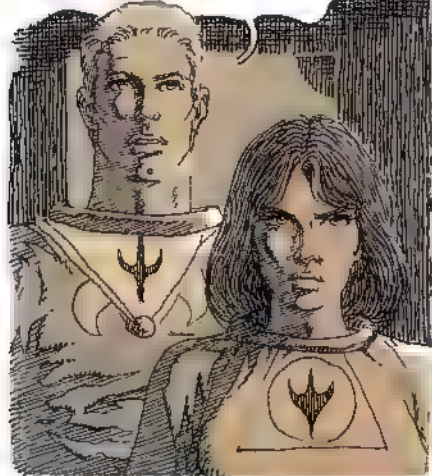


THE STARS!?!
THAT'S WHERE I SAW THAT TRIDENT FOR THE FIRST TIME. **AMONG THE STARS!**



WE'VE ARRIVED IN SIGHT OF THE EARTH, MY FRIENDS... THE CRADLE OF OUR FIRST ORIGINS!

THANKS TO THE THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF TECHNOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOSENSORY ADVANCE WE HAVE, WE CAN RECLAIM IT BY PRETENDING THAT WE'RE GODS!



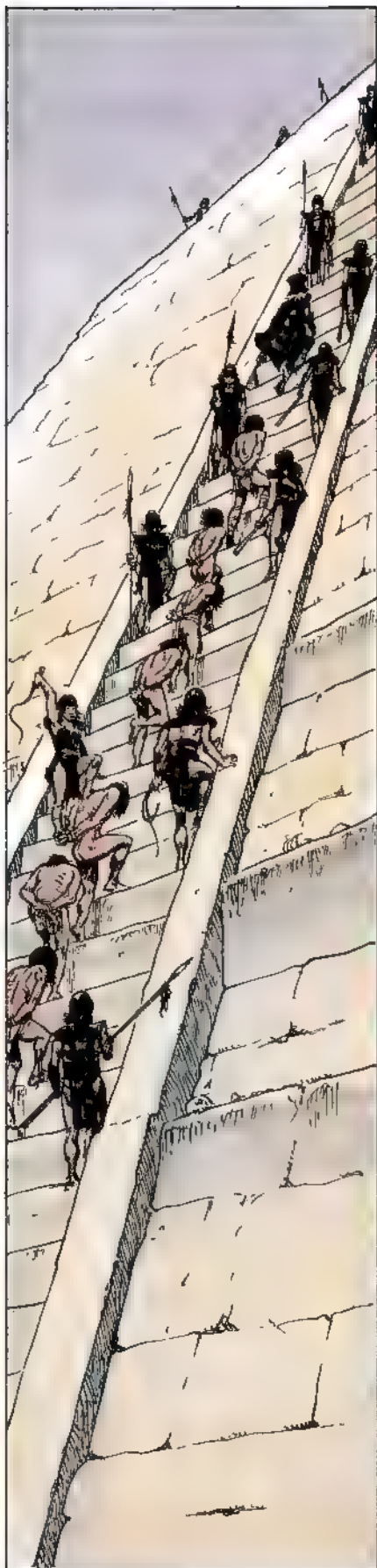
GODS!... THE TRIDENT... THE FLYING SHIPS... **COULD OGOTAI REALLY BE?...**

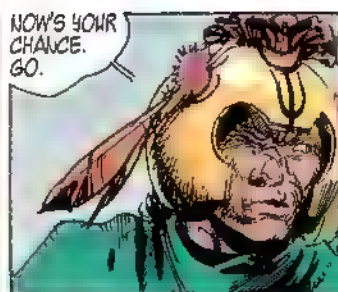
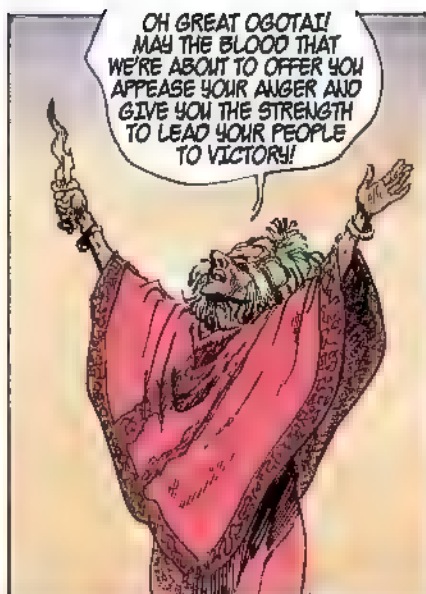


* SEE CHILD OF THE STARS.

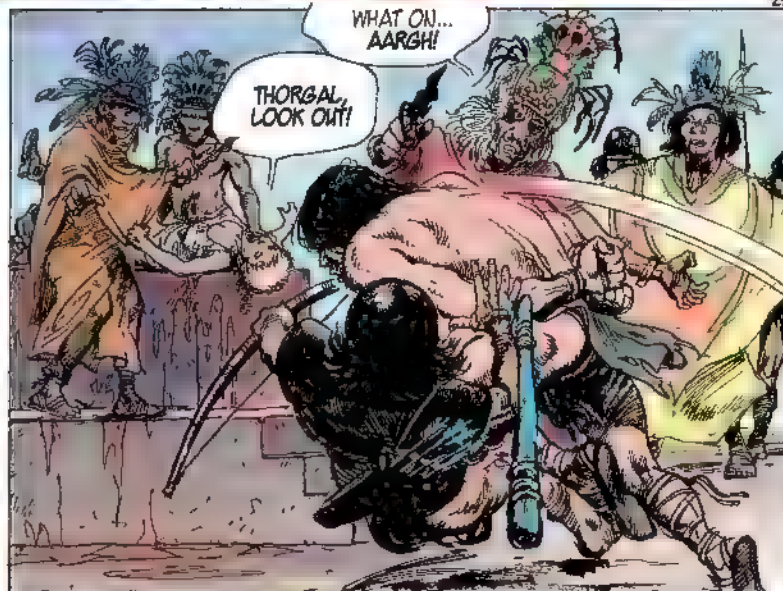
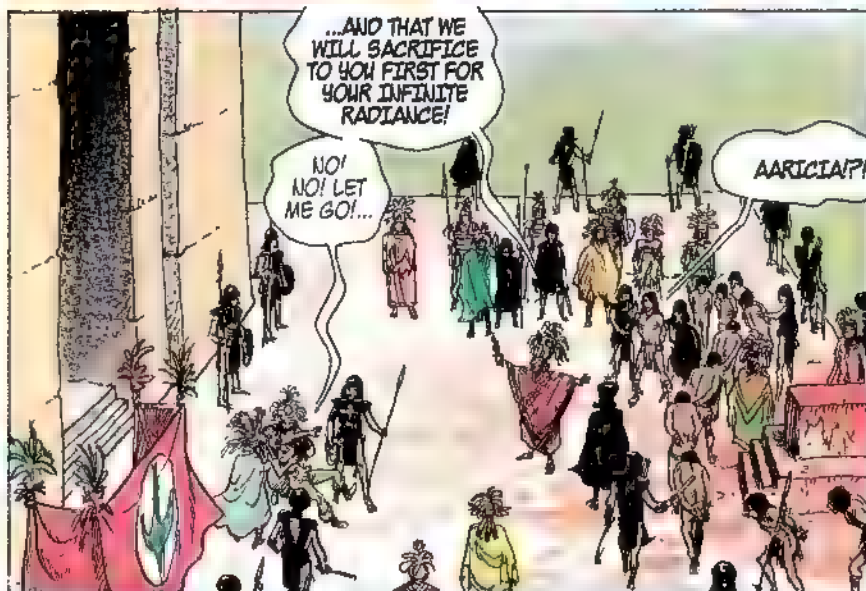
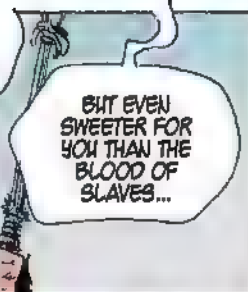








STOP TREMBLING, HOG.
WITH THIS HELMET AND
PAINT, NOBODY WILL
RECOGNIZE ME.

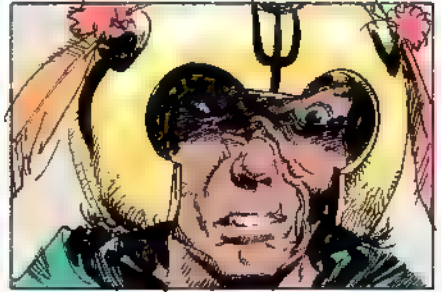




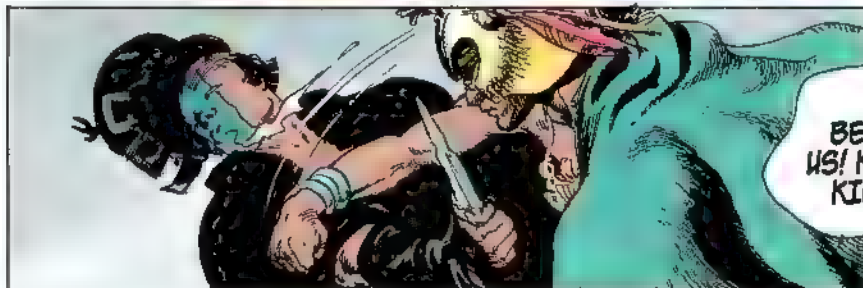
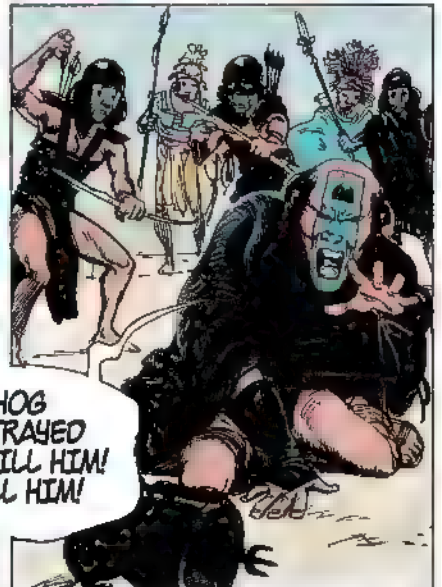


KRISS OF VALNOR!

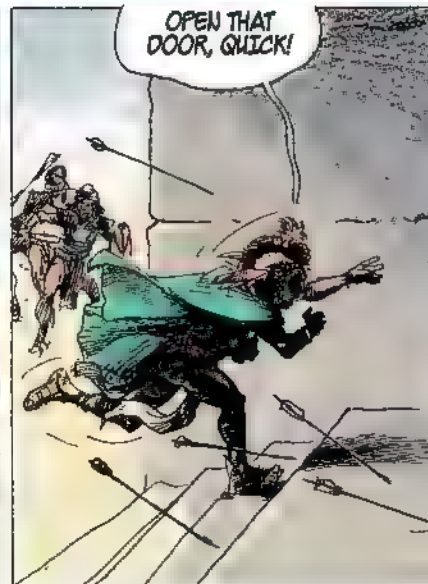
A STUPID REACTION, I'LL ADMIT, BUT NOW WE'RE EVEN, MY DEAR.*



THAT WOMAN! A FOREIGNER!... IT WAS YOU WHO...



HOG BETRAYED US! KILL HIM! KILL HIM!



OPEN THAT DOOR, QUICK!

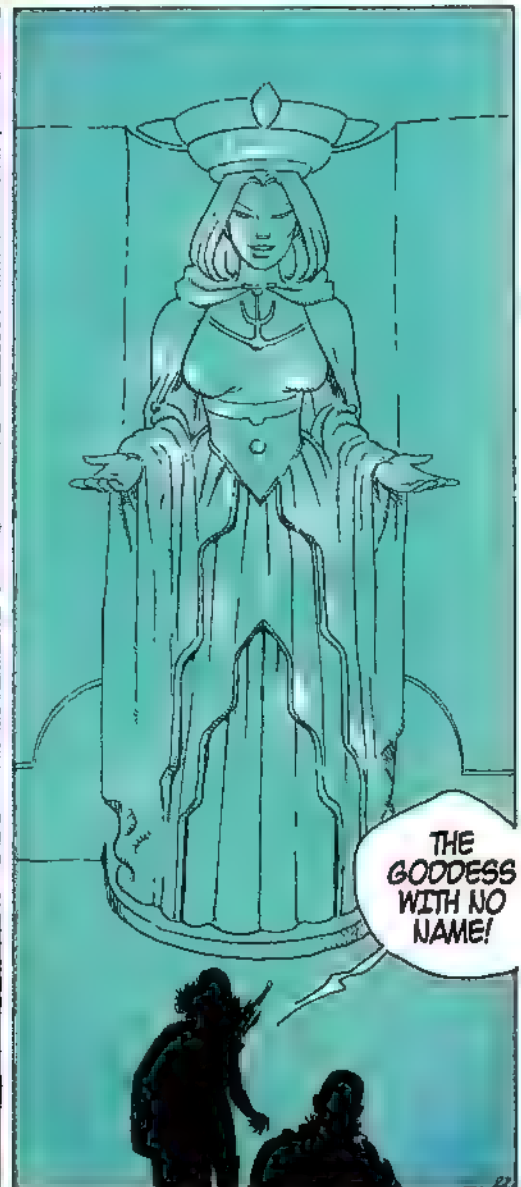
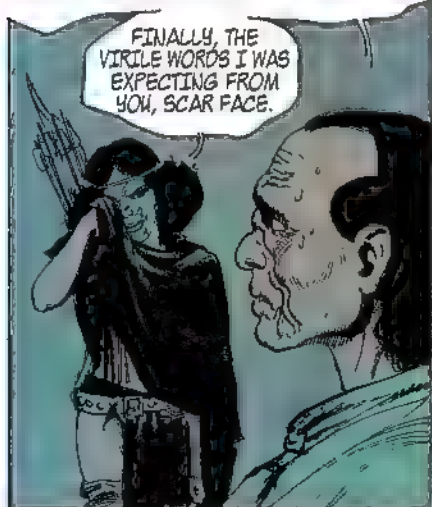


THORGALI...

* SEE THE LAND OF QA.



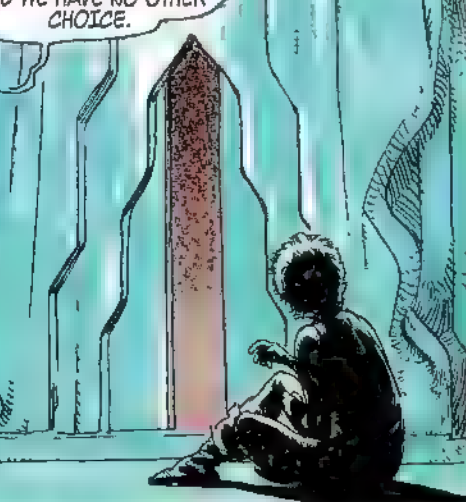
BUT IN A WAY, I AM RELIEVED. I'M STILL AFRAID, BUT AT LEAST I'M NO LONGER A COWARD. SO I'LL BE AT YOUR SIDE TO TRY AND DEFEAT OGOTAI.



THE... THE STATUE'S OPENING... LET'S NOT GO IN; IT MUST BE A TRAP.



IT HAS TO BE A TRAP. BUT IT'S ALSO THE ENTRANCE WE WERE LOOKING FOR, AND WE HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE.



COME ON, GET UP, BEAUTIFUL! AND DON'T THINK I SAVED YOU OUT OF THE GOODNESS OF MY HEART... SINCE THERE ARE TRAPS, YOU'LL BE GOING FIRST!



OGOTAI WILL SEE TO THE CRUEL PUNISHMENTS OWED TO THOSE SACRILEGIOUS FOOLS WHO HAVE DARED TO DEFILE HIS SACRED RETREAT. HIS ANGER WILL BE TERRIBLE, AND TO APPEASE IT, THERE MUST BE BLOOD!



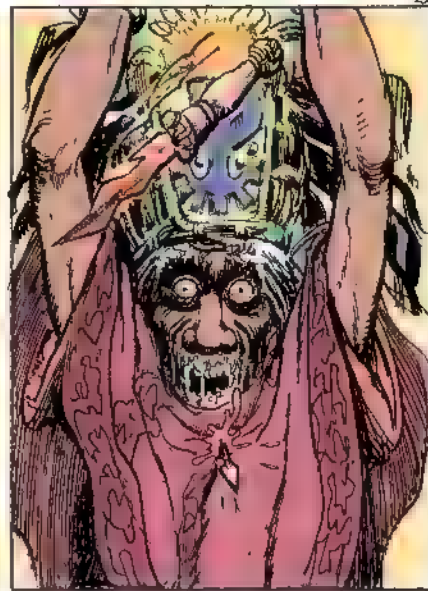
A LOT OF BLOOD! CUT THE SACRIFICES OPEN! CUT THE THROATS OF THE HOG'S FALSE-WARRIOR ESCORT! BRING ALL THE SLAVES, ALL THE PRISONERS, AND CUT THEIR THROATS TO THE VERY LAST ONE!



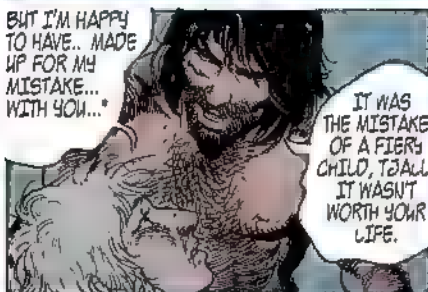
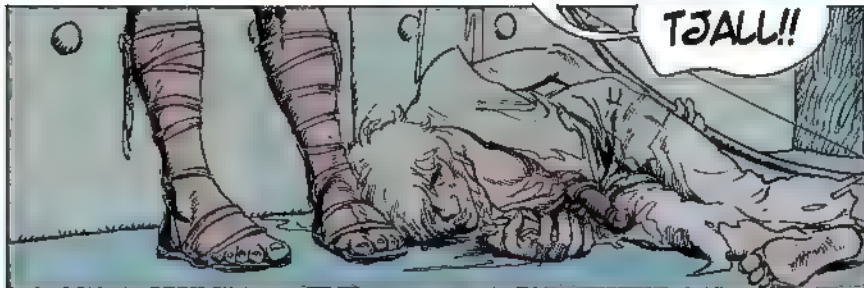
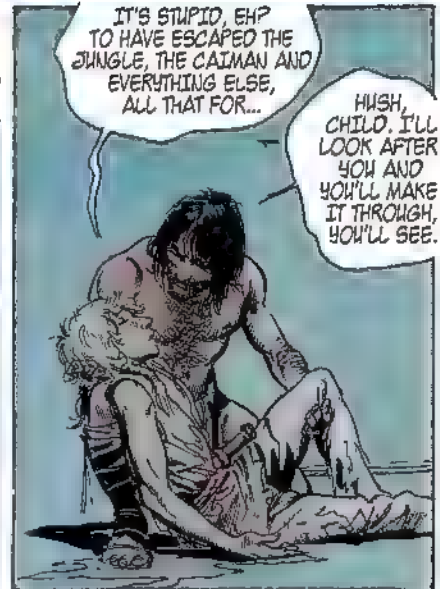
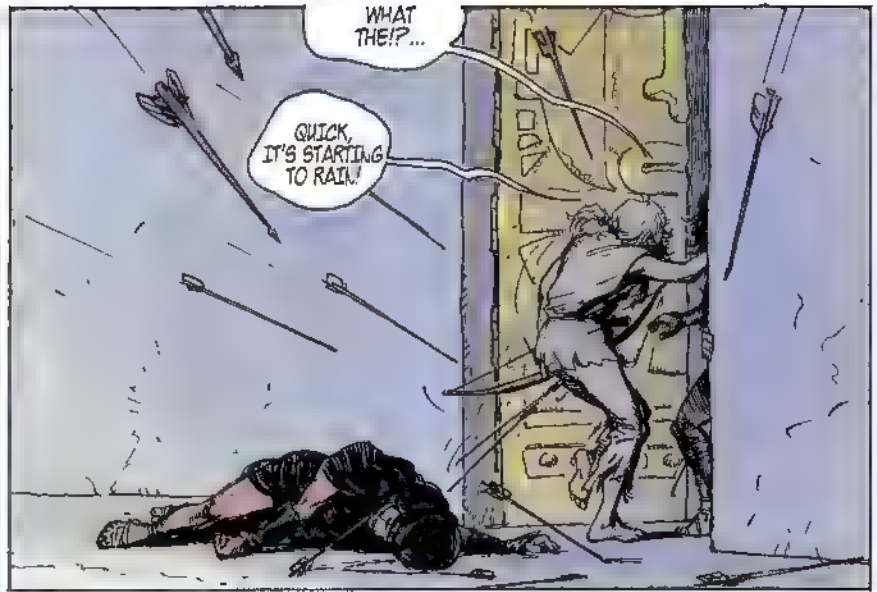
STARTING WITH THIS FOREIGN DEMON, WHO WILL PAY FOR HIS ACCOMPLICES AND WHOSE HEART I'LL RIP OUT WITH MY OWN HANDS.



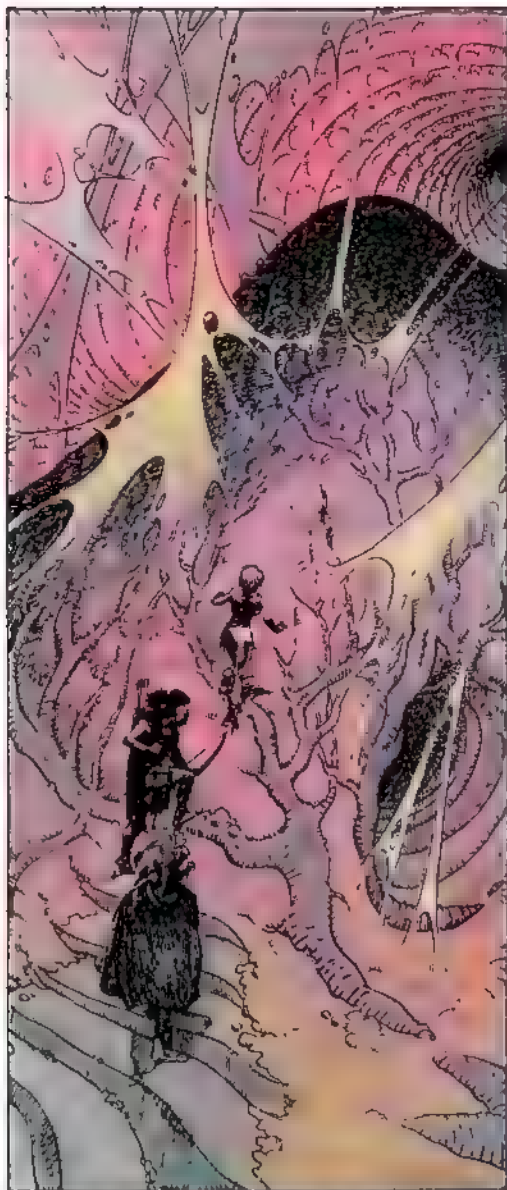
DIE, SCOUNDREL! MAY YOUR ENTRAILS FOREVER ROT IN THE...



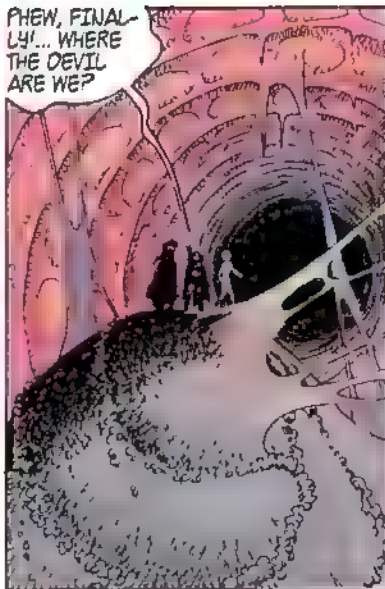




* SEE THE EYES OF TANATLOC.



PHEW, FINALLY!... WHERE THE DEVIL ARE WE?



NOWHERE AND EVERYWHERE. SINCE WE ENTERED THE LABYRINTH, WE'RE ELSEWHERE!



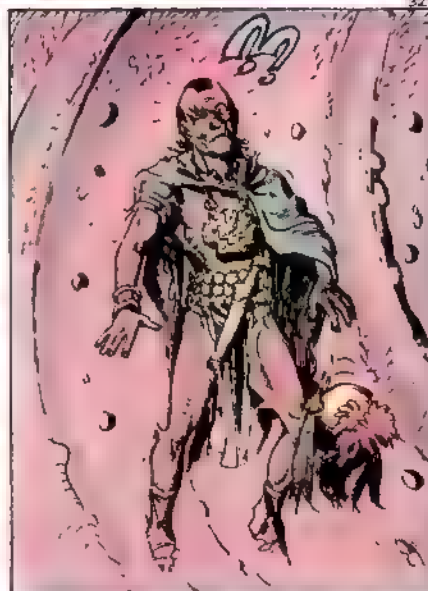
IT'S... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR THIS CURSED TOWER TO HOLD ALL THIS...

I TOLD YOU, KRISS OF VALNOR. OGOTAI HAS THE POWER TO MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE ONLY HE KNOWS WHAT AWAITS US IN THERE.



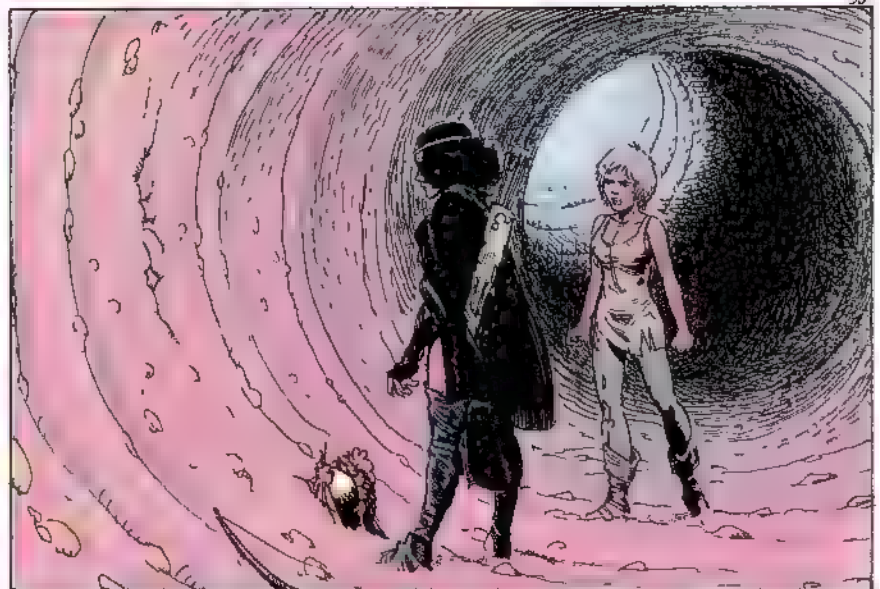
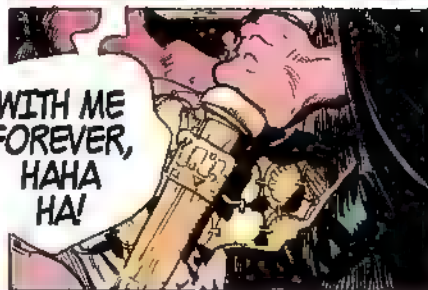
WE'LL SEE. YOUR OGOTAI SHOULD KNOW THAT IT TAKES A LOT MORE THAN THAT TO SCARE ME.

SPEAK FOR YOURSELF. NOT TO MENTION THE HEAT THAT'S GETTING MORE AND MORE INTENSE...





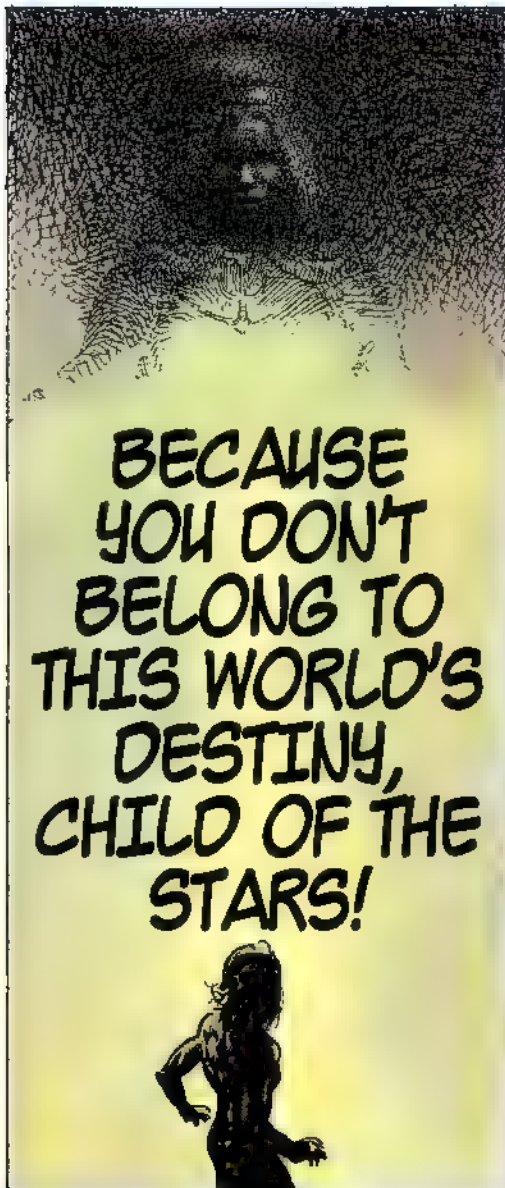
THE WALLS...
THEY'RE DRAG-
GING ME IN!







WHY MUST MY LIFE BE CONSTANTLY CROSSED
WITH SUFFERING AND DEATH, WHEN ALL I
WANT IS PEACE AND LOVE WITH THOSE WHO
ARE DEAR TO ME?... WHY?...
WHY!?



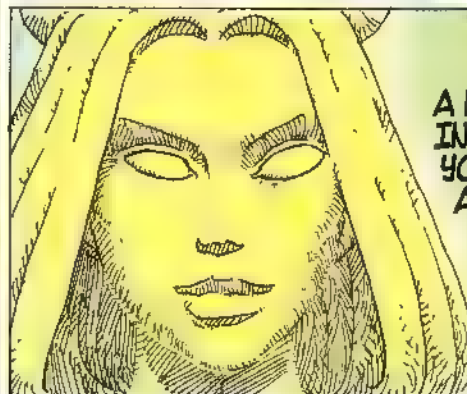
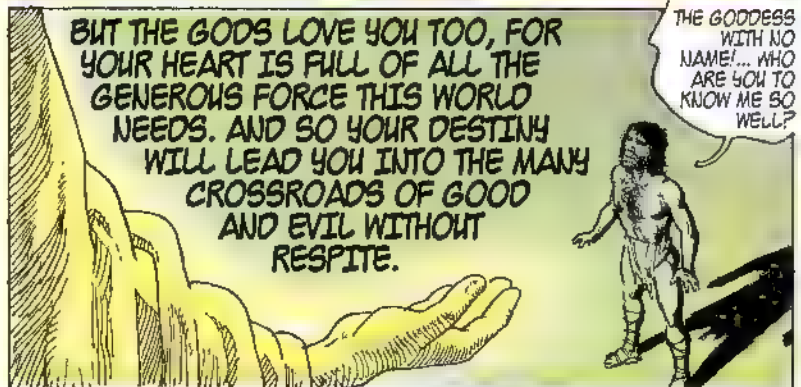
**BECAUSE
YOU DON'T
BELONG TO
THIS WORLD'S
DESTINY,
CHILD OF THE
STARS!**

YOUR EXISTENCE ISN'T
WRITTEN IN THE LINES
TRACED THROUGH ALL
ETERNITY FOR MANKIND
ON EARTH. AND THE GODS
ARE IRRITATED, FOR
IT IS INADMISSIBLE
TO BE AND TO NOT
BE AT THE SAME
TIME.

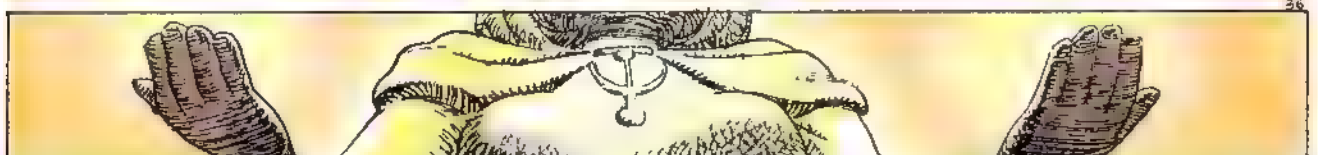
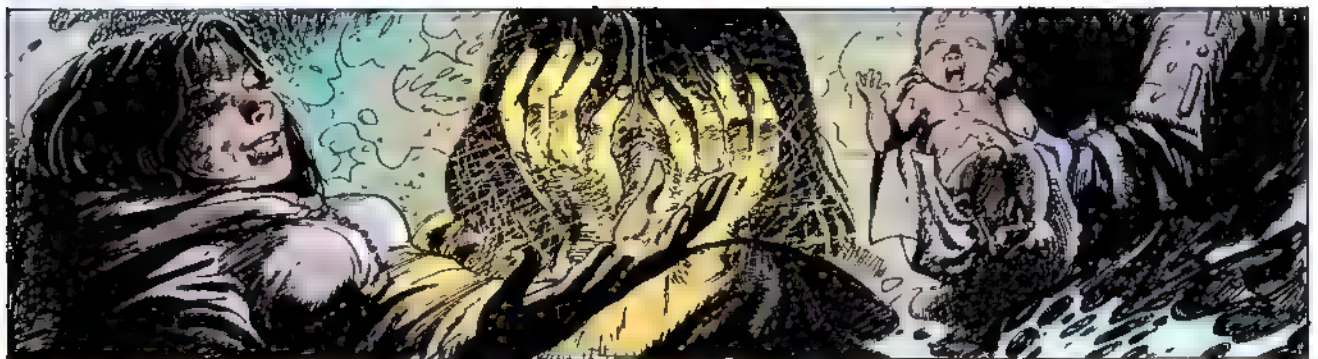
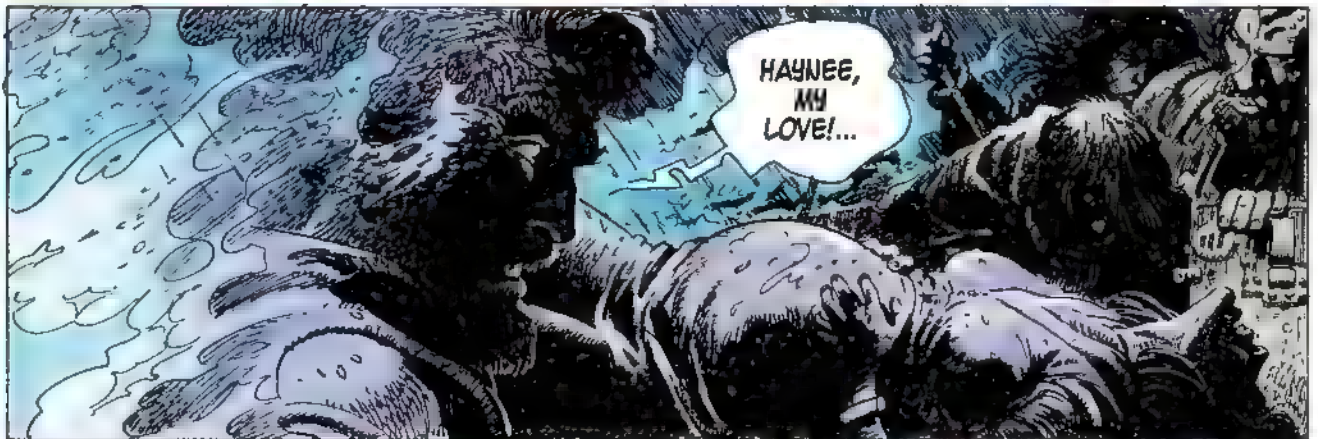
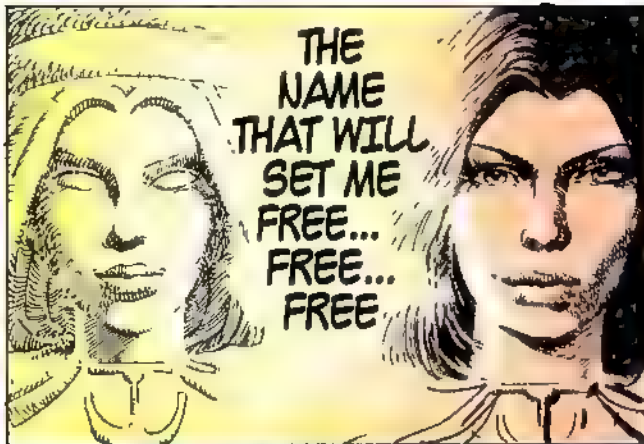


BUT THE GODS LOVE YOU TOO, FOR
YOUR HEART IS FULL OF ALL THE
GENEROUS FORCE THIS WORLD
NEEDS. AND SO YOUR DESTINY
WILL LEAD YOU INTO THE MANY
CROSSROADS OF GOOD
AND EVIL WITHOUT
RESPITE.

THE GODDESS
WITH NO
NAME!... WHO
ARE YOU TO
KNOW ME SO
WELL?



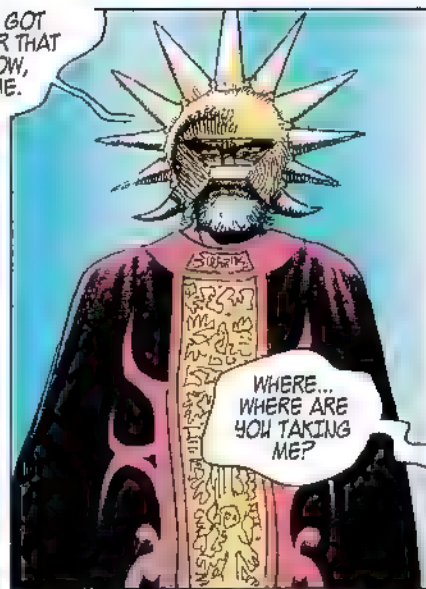
FOR YOU, I HAVE
A NAME, CHILD.
A NAME BURIED IN THE
INNERMOST DEPTHS OF
YOUR FIRST MEMORY...
A NAME THAT I HAVE
BEEN WAITING
TO HEAR YOU
SPEAK FOR MANY
LONG YEARS...



YOU'RE A REMARKABLE YOUNG WOMAN, KRISS OF VALNOR. FEARLESS AND UNSCRIPULOUS, READY TO SACRIFICE ANYONE AND ANYTHING TO MEET YOUR ENDS... COMPLETELY REMARKABLE.



THAT'S WHAT GOT YOU HERE, FOR THAT MATTER. NOW, FOLLOW ME.



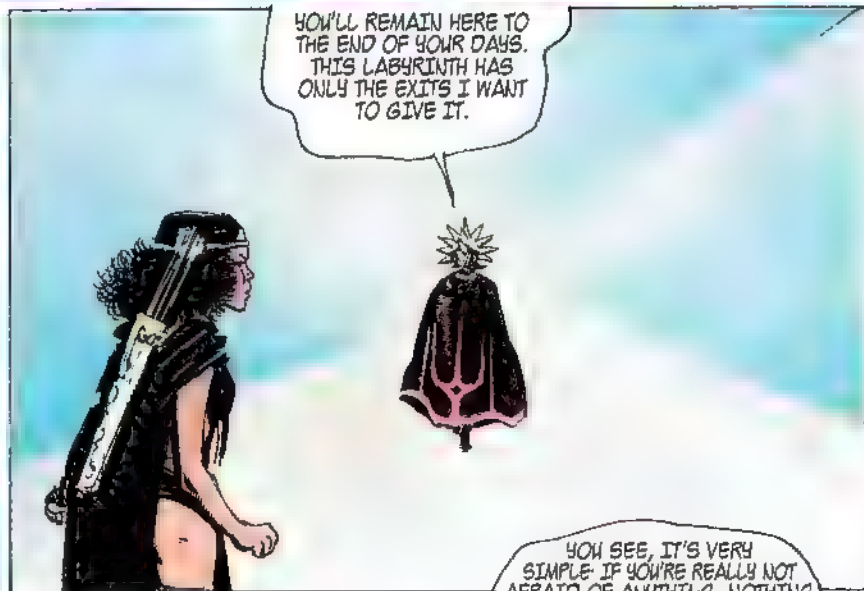
WHERE... WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?

TO YOUR REWARD OR YOUR PUNISHMENT; IT'S UP TO YOU.

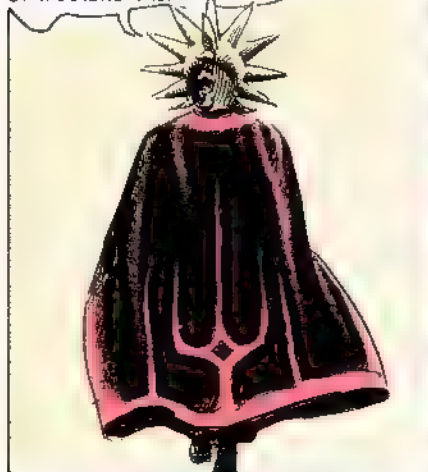


AND IF I REFUSE?

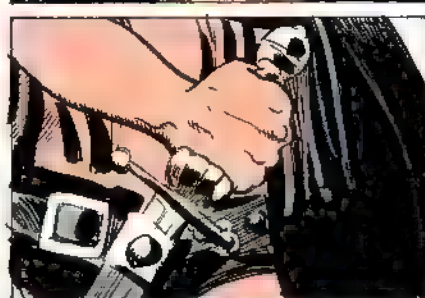
YOU'LL REMAIN HERE TO THE END OF YOUR DAYS. THIS LABYRINTH HAS ONLY THE EXITS I WANT TO GIVE IT.



ITS TWISTS AND TURNS ONLY EXIST IN THE IMAGINATION OF THOSE WHO DARE TO VENTURE INTO IT. AND ITS TRAPS ARE BORN ONLY FROM THE FEAR OF MEETING THEM.

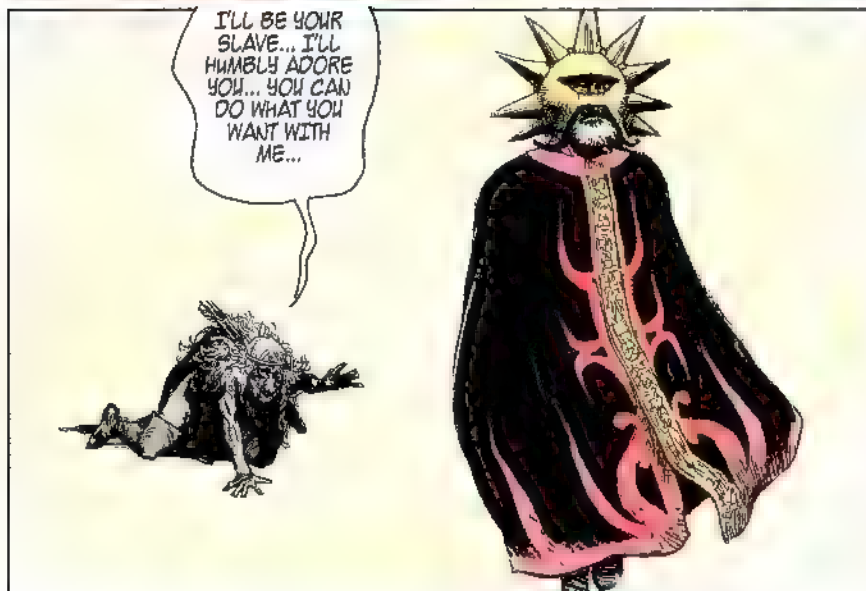
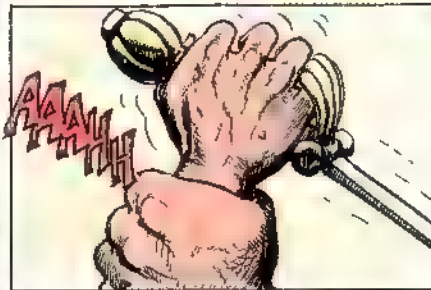
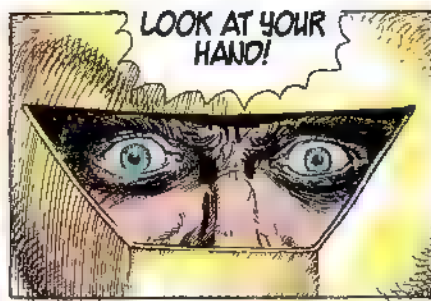
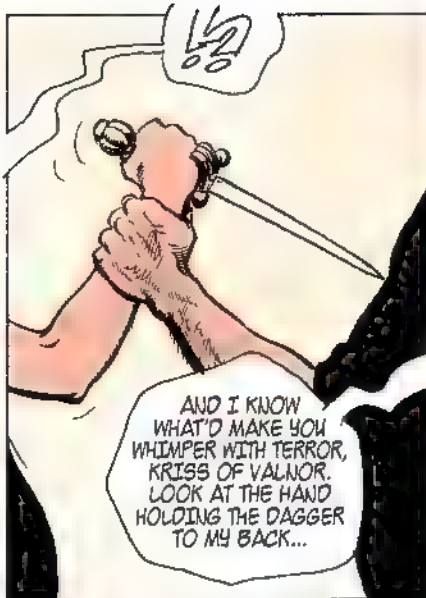


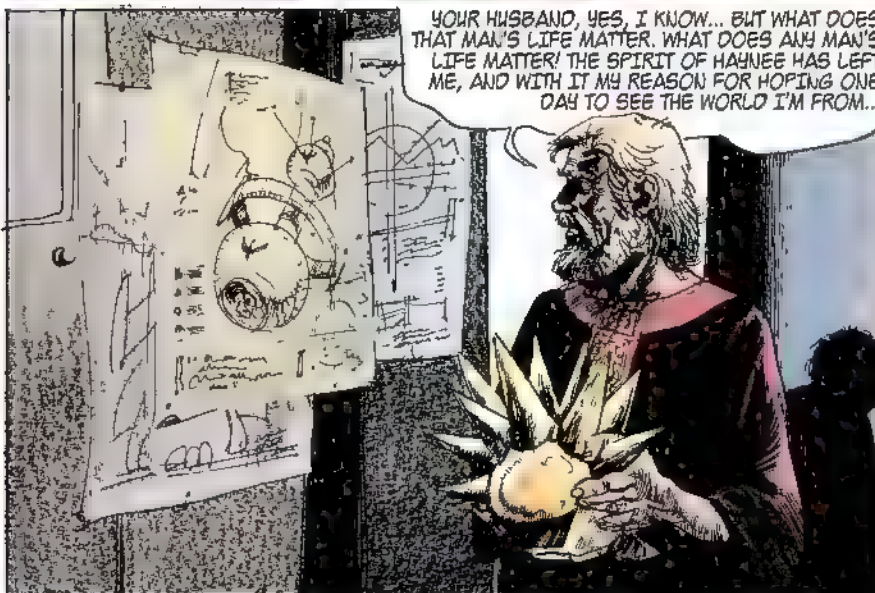
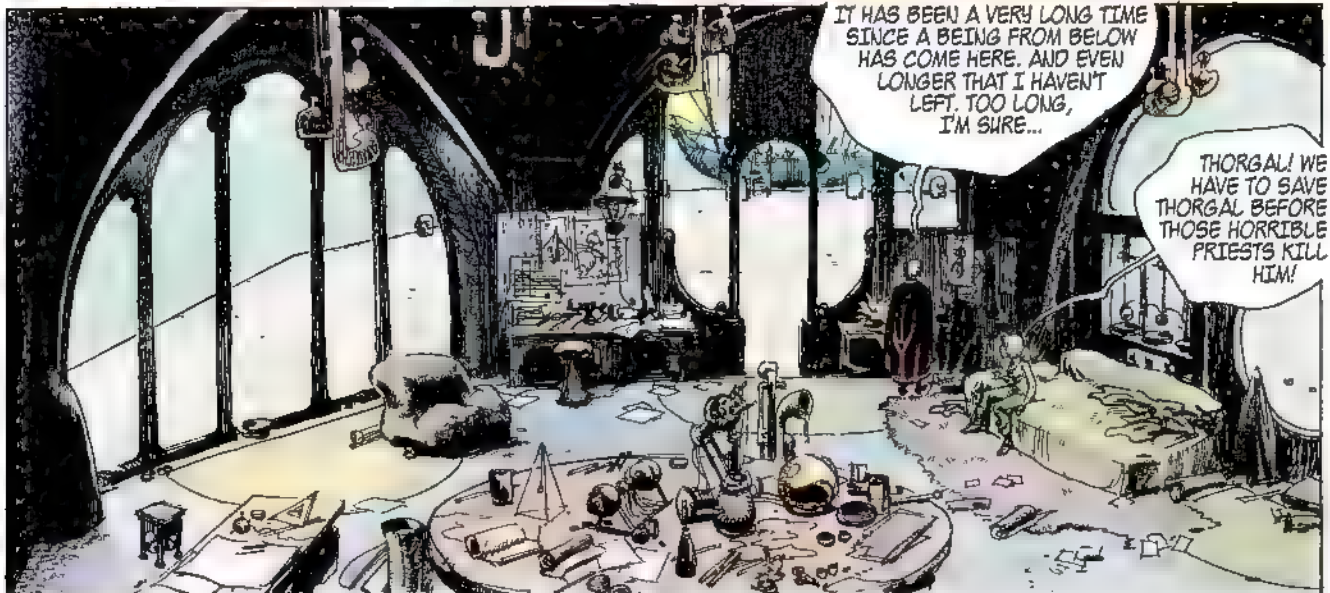
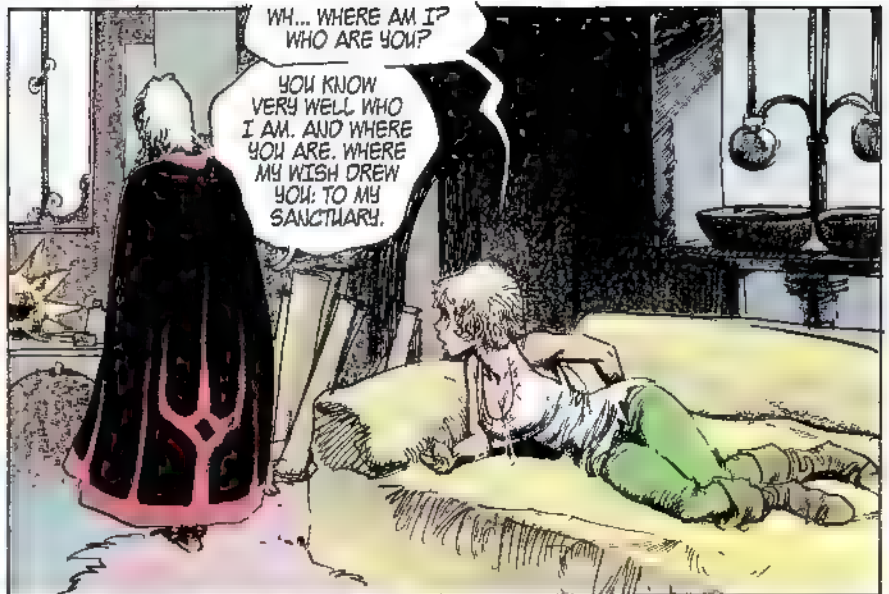
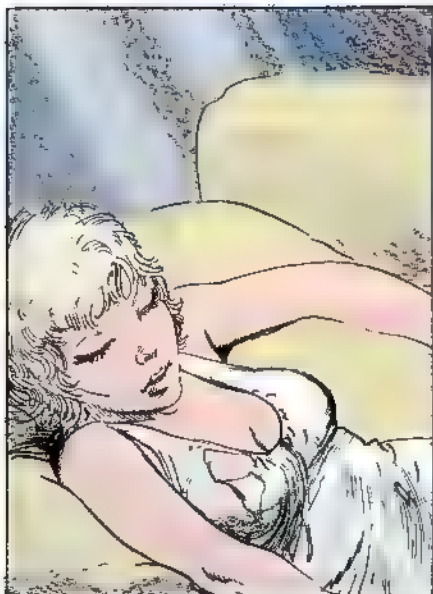
BUT THEIR EFFECTS ARE DEFINITELY REAL, REMEMBER.



YOU SEE, IT'S VERY SIMPLE. IF YOU'RE REALLY NOT AFRAID OF ANYTHING, NOTHING CAN HAPPEN TO YOU HERE. BUT THERE HAS TO BE A SECRET FEAR OF SOMETHING IN EVERY BEING.







AND YOU, YOU'LL BE THE WITNESS. I DON'T KNOW WHY I CHOSE YOU... PERHAPS BECAUSE YOUR HAIR IS THE SAME COLOUR AS MINE, BUT THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT...

NO, I... YOU'RE CRAZY!...

YOU'LL BE MY NEW GODDESS. COME, WE'LL GIVE THE MAYAXATL WARRIORS THE ATTACK SIGNAL FOR THE XINJIN TERRITORY, AND THEN WE'LL SET OFF...

...TO CONQUER THE WHOLE WORLD!

LET HER GO, VARTH!

THORGAL!

THERE'LL BE NO
MORE CONQUERING,
VARTH. YOUR HIGH
PRIEST... NAZCA... HOG...
ALL YOUR WARRIOR
CHIEFS ARE DEAD.
IT'S OVER.

HOW DID
YOU GET HERE?...
WITHOUT GOING
THROUGH THE
LABYRINTH?...

I HAVE WALKED A LONG PATH TO GET
TO YOU, VARTH. A LOT LONGER THAN
YOUR LABYRINTH... THE PATH OF A
LIFETIME...

I DON'T KNOW
WHO TAUGHT YOU MY
NAME... THE NAME THAT
I'D EVEN FORGOTTEN
MYSELF FOR A LONG
TIME...

...BUT YOU WILL
NEVER SPEAK
IT AGAIN!
DIE!

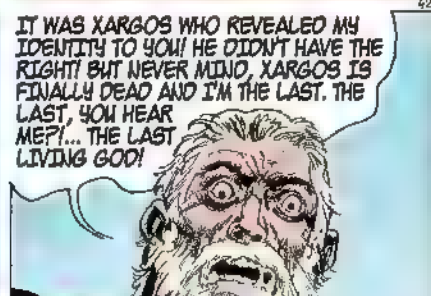
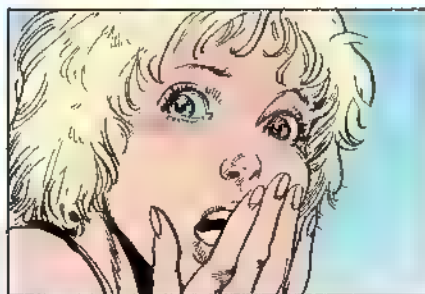
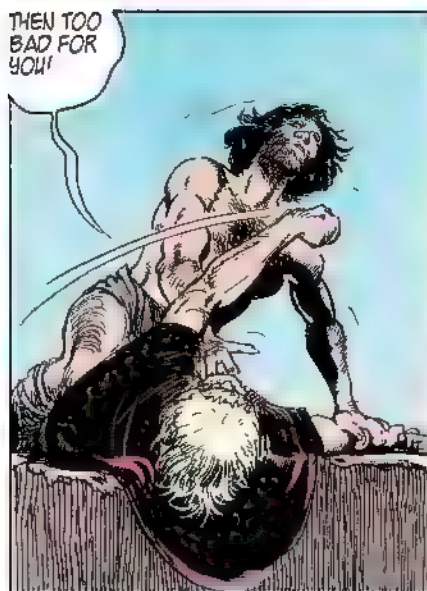
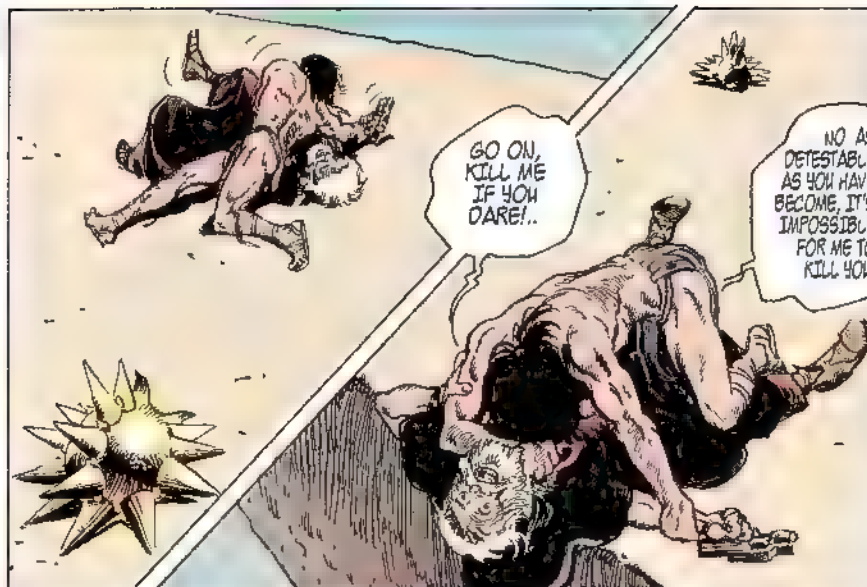
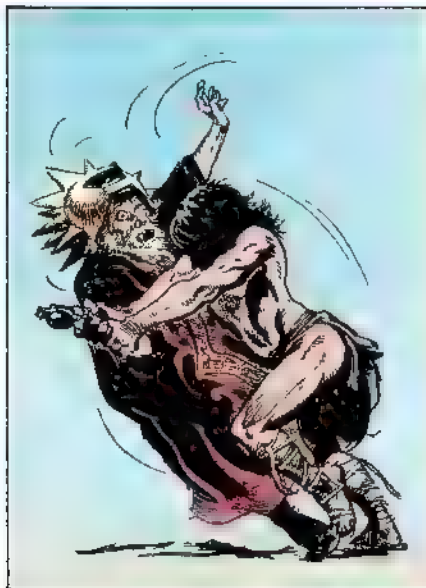
NO!

THE STRENGTH IN
ME IS GREATER
THAN YOUR POWERS,
VARTH. I HAVE THE
STRENGTH OF
HAYNEE IN ME!

HAYNEE!?

HAYNEE'S MINE, CURSED DOG!
MINE ALONE! AND IF MY POWERS
DON'T WORK ON YOU...

I STILL HAVE
THIS!...



* SEE CHILD OF THE STARS.



AND YOU, TOO.
LIKE THE OTHERS,
YOU'LL LOVE ME AND
OBEY ME... LIKE
THE OTHERS!...

I DON'T
SEE A GOD,
VARTH...

I JUST SEE AN OLD MAN WHO THINKS HE'S A
GOD. AN OLD MAN WHOM GRIEF AND SOLITUDE
HAVE TURNED MAD, AND WHO AVENGES HIS
EXILE BY SOWING DEATH AND
DESTRUCTION



BUT THE WORST THING,
VARTH, THE MOST TERRIBLE
FOR ME, IS THAT THIS OLD
MAN, WITH RED HANDS
COVERED IN THE BLOOD
OF A WHOLE PEOPLE
IS MY FATHER.



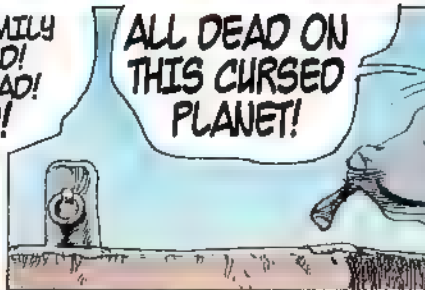
I'M YOUR SON, VARTH. THE
CHILD HAYNEE BROUGHT
INTO THE WORLD BEFORE
DYING.



LIES!



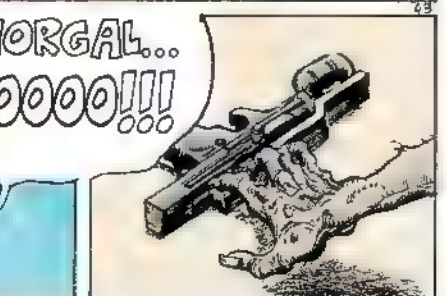
ALL MY FAMILY
ARE DEAD!
DEAD! DEAD!
DEAD!

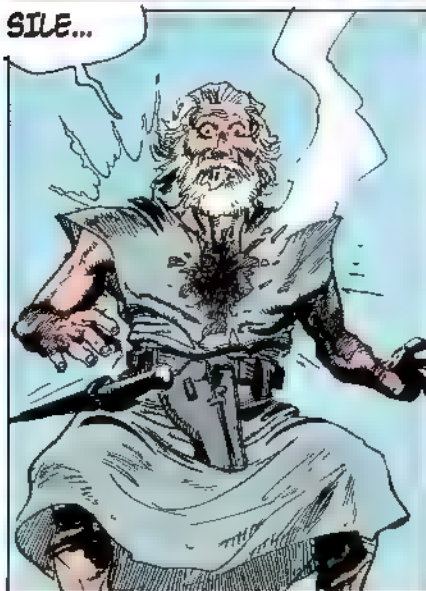


ALL DEAD ON
THIS CURSED
PLANET!

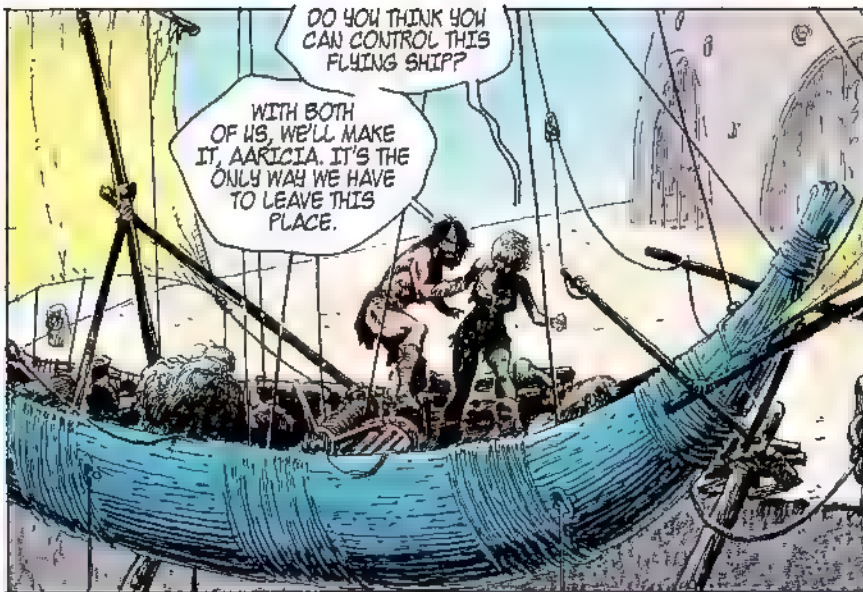


THORGAL...
NOOOO!!!



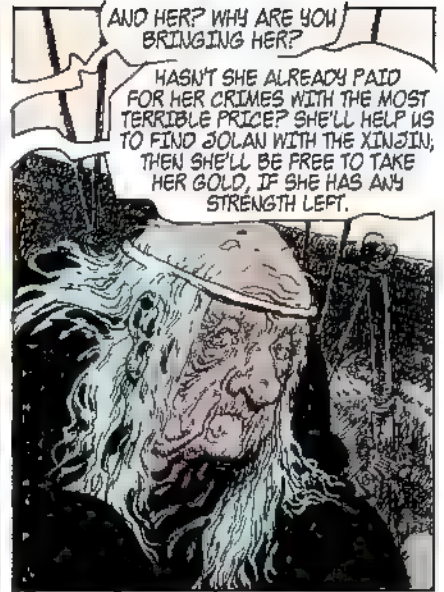






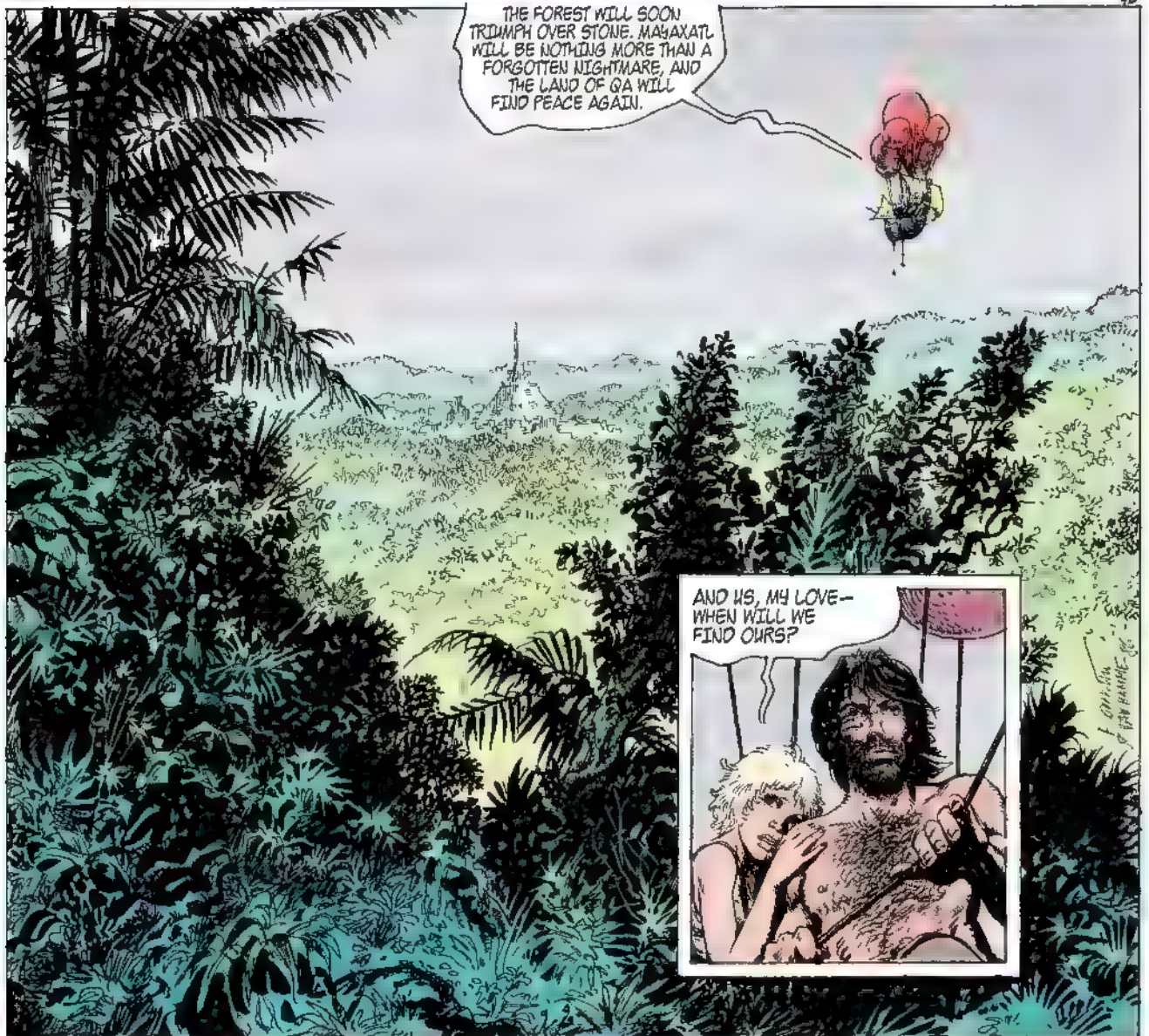
DO YOU THINK YOU
CAN CONTROL THIS
FLYING SHIP?

WITH BOTH
OF US, WE'LL MAKE
IT, AAKICIA. IT'S THE
ONLY WAY WE HAVE
TO LEAVE THIS
PLACE.



AND HER? WHY ARE YOU
BRINGING HER?

HASN'T SHE ALREADY PAID
FOR HER CRIMES WITH THE MOST
TERRIBLE PRICE? SHE'LL HELP US
TO FIND SOLAN WITH THE XINJIN;
THEN SHE'LL BE FREE TO TAKE
HER GOLD, IF SHE HAS ANY
STRENGTH LEFT.



THE FOREST WILL SOON
TRIUMPH OVER STONE. MAYAXATL
WILL BE NOTHING MORE THAN A
FORGOTTEN NIGHTMARE, AND
THE LAND OF QA WILL
FIND PEACE AGAIN.



AND US, MY LOVE—
WHEN WILL WE
FIND OURS?





THORCAL

Between Earth and Sun

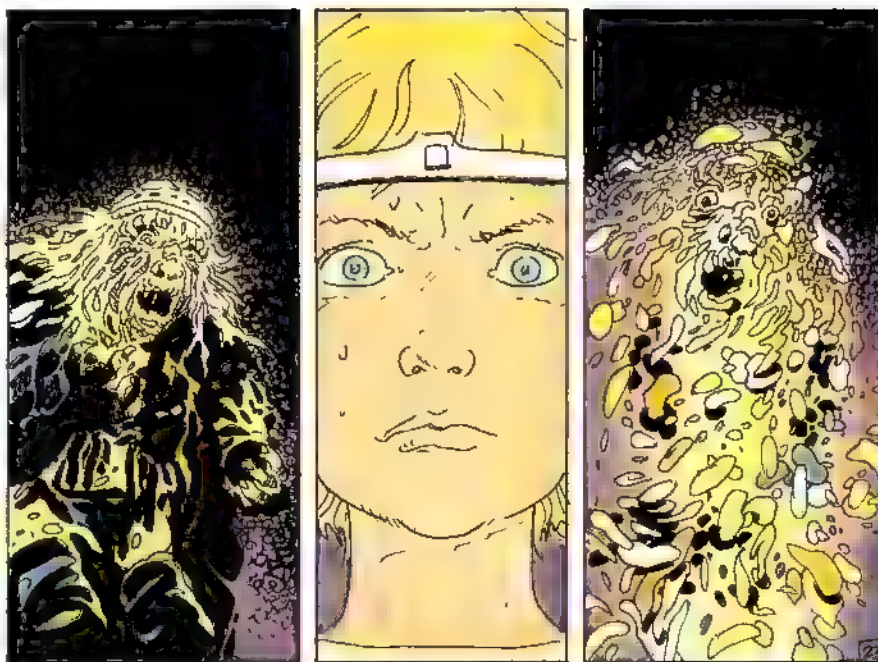
ROSINSKI - VAN HAMME

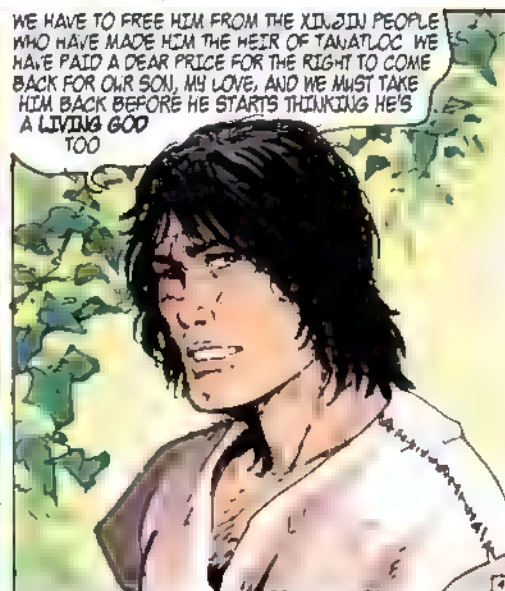
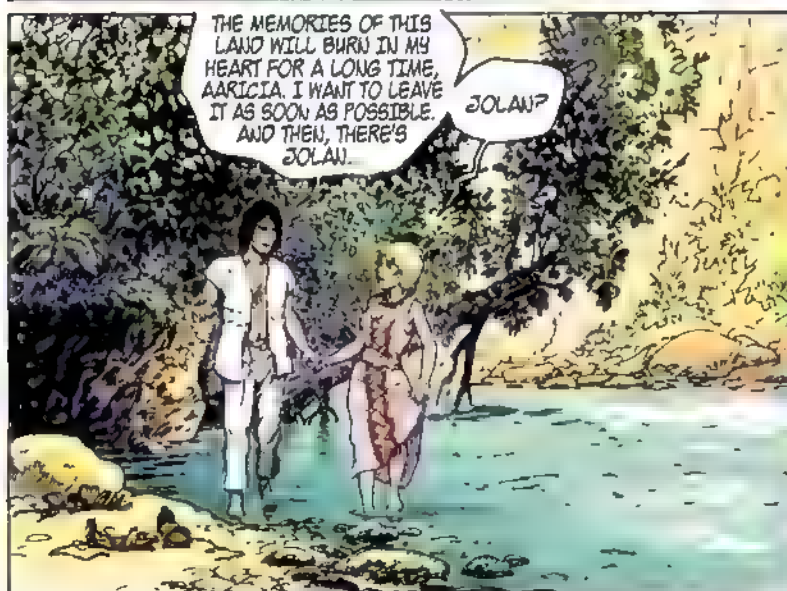
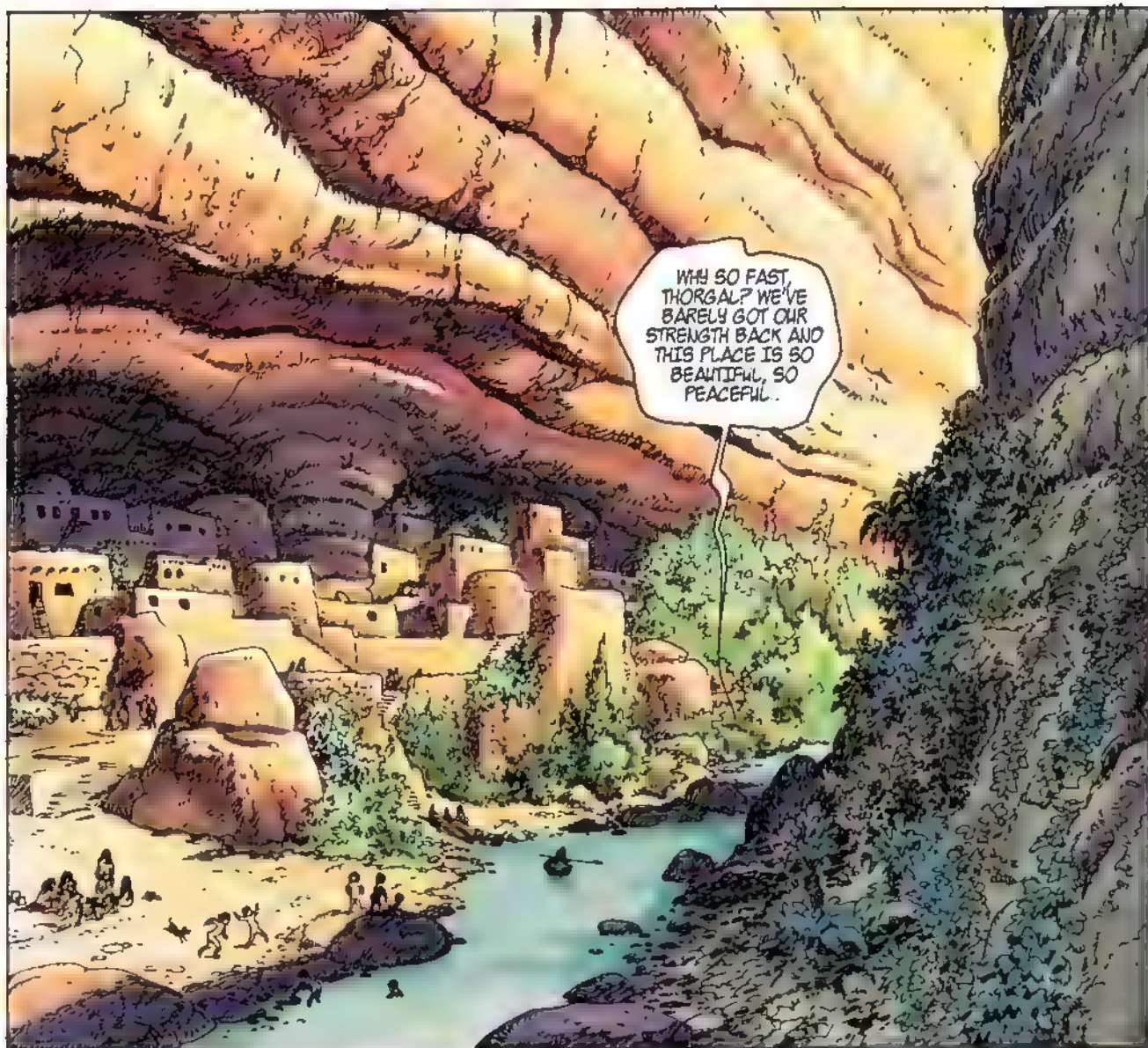


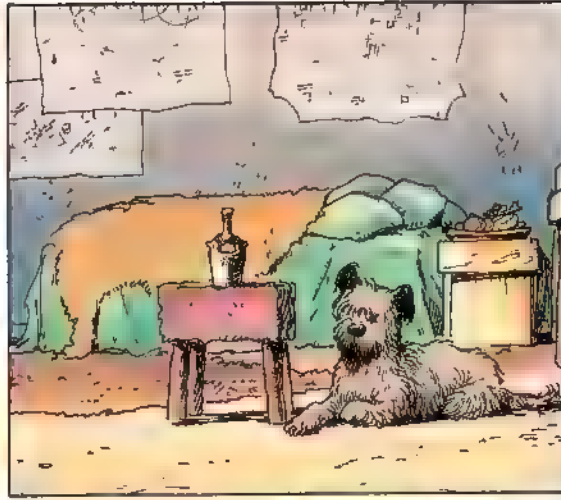
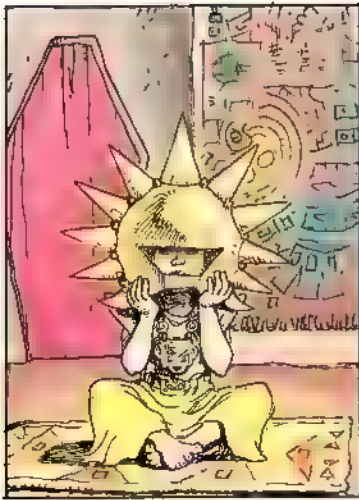
ROSINSKI-VAN HAMME

THOR

Between Earth and Sun

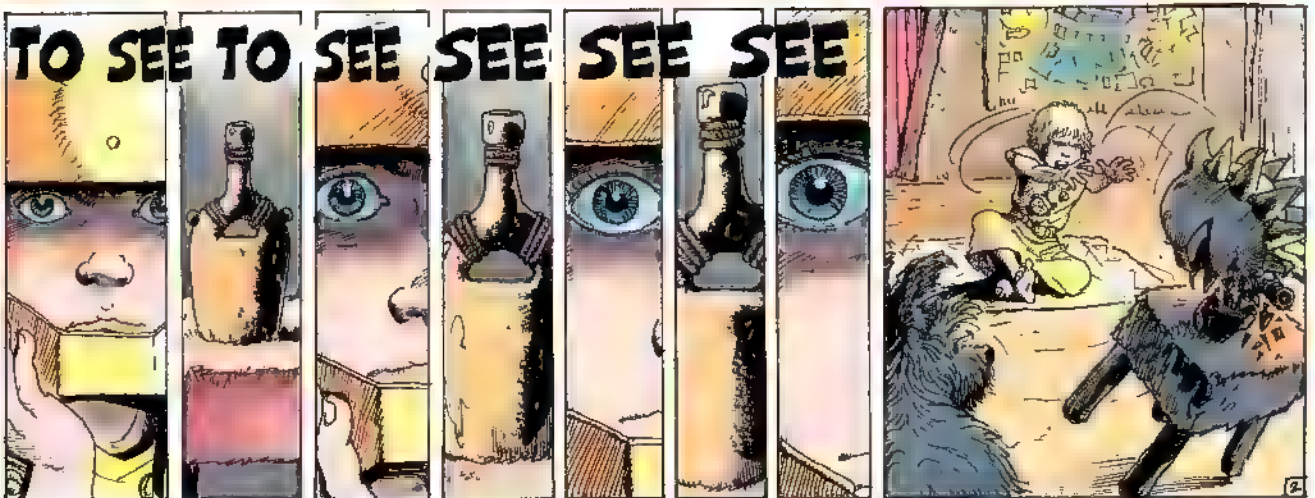
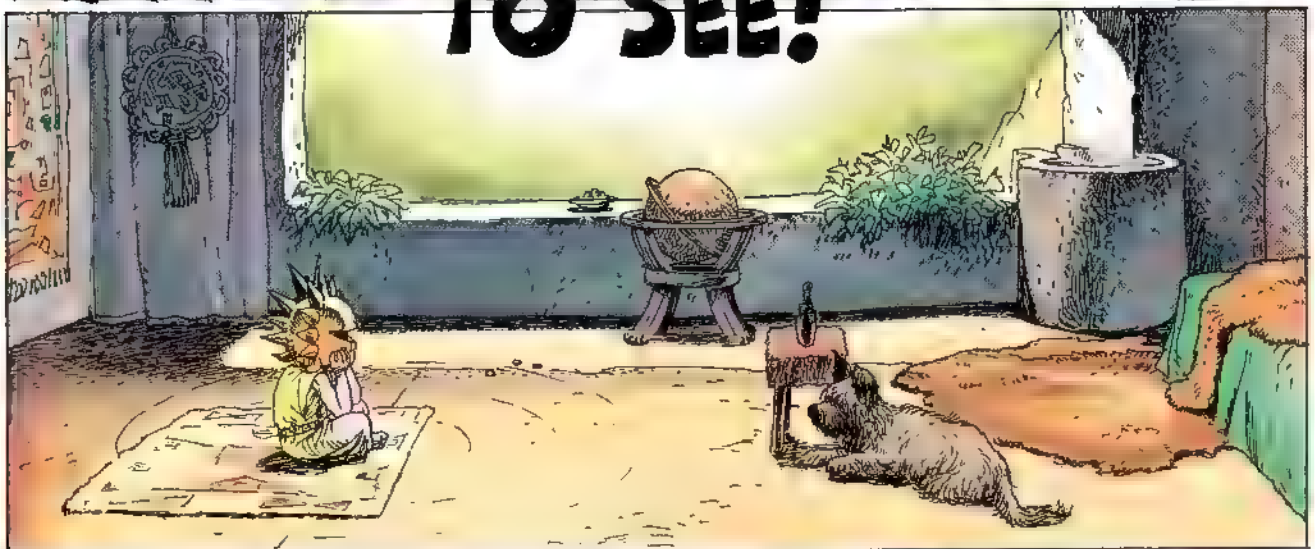


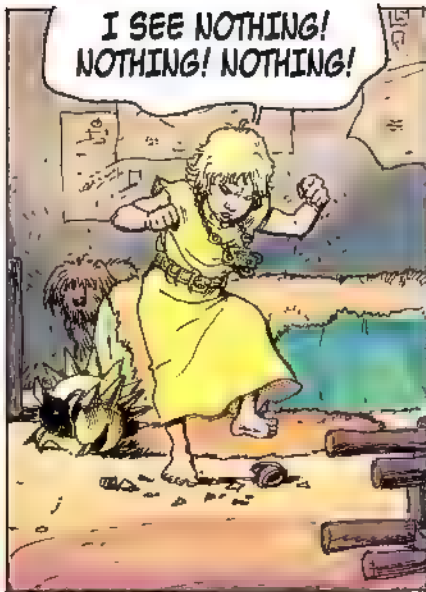




YOU MUST LEARN TO SEE, JOLAN, TO SEE!

TO SEE!

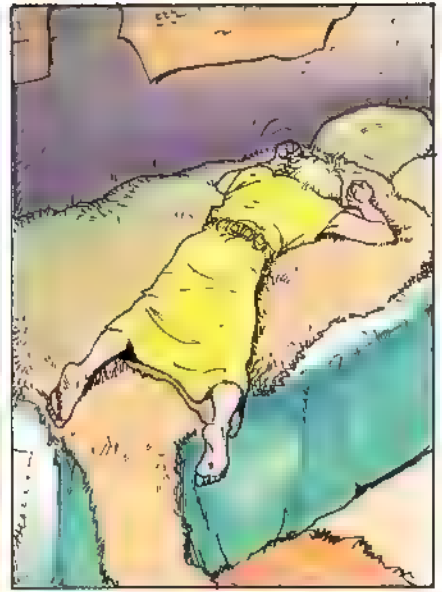




I SEE NOTHING!
NOTHING! NOTHING!



OUCH!



AREN'T YOU GETTING
DISHEARTENED A LITTLE
TOO QUICKLY?

NEBAC! YOU
YOU WERE THERE?

I'M ALWAYS HERE, LORD
HURUKAN, TO SERVE YOU
AND TO COME TO
YOUR HELP.



YOU KNOW, NEBAC,
THE HEADPIECE THAT
THORGAL BROUGHT ME...
IT'S NOT A REAL MAGIC
HEADPIECE IT'S JUST
PAINTED WOOD.

I KNOW.
OGOTAI ONLY
USED IT TO
IMPRESS HIS
PEOPLE.



THE TRUE POWER
WAS WITHIN HIM. AS
IT WAS IN TANATLOC,
AND AS WE KNOW IT
IS IN YOU. THAT'S
WHY WE CALLED YOU
HURUKAN, "THE ONE
WHO SEES."

BUT I SEE NOTHING,
NEBAC. SINCE
TANATLOC DIED,
I... I CAN'T DO IT
ANYMORE.



YOU'RE STILL VERY YOUNG,
LORD. YOU'LL LEARN. ALL YOU
NEED IS TIME AND PATIENCE.
AND I'LL HELP YOU.

I'D ALSO LIKE TO GET BACK TO OUR ISLAND, AND TO SEE NORTHLAND TOO; THE LAND OF OUR YOUTH. BUT HOW WILL WE CROSS THE GREAT SEAP?

I DON'T KNOW.

PERHAPS ONE OF THOSE FLYING SHIPS COULD TAKE US IF THE XINGJIN LET US LEAVE...

I DID IT, THORGAL, I DID IT!

A DOUBLE CURVE BOW, JUST LIKE THEY HAVE IN THE FAR EAST. I'VE FINALLY MANAGED TO MAKE ONE IN YOUR SIZE. WITH WOOD FROM HERE, BOTH SUPPLE AND VERY STRONG. I DON'T WANT TO SHOW OFF, BUT I THINK THAT THIS WILL BE MY ARMOURER'S MASTERPIECE

ITS RANGE SHOULD EXCEED AN ORDINARY BOW'S BY HALF. BUT I'M AFRAID YOU WILL NEED A LOT OF STRENGTH TO PULL IT.

IT LOOKS SUPERB, TREE FOOT. I CAN'T WAIT TO TRY IT.

THAT'S IT. GO AND PLAY WARRIOR, THEN. MEANWHILE, I'LL PLAY MY ROLE OF THE GOOD WIFE AND HELP TREE FOOT'S WOMEN PREPARE THE MEAL.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

THAT I FOUND OUT WHAT YOU AND AARICIA WERE TRYING TO HIDE FROM ME. THAT, BEFORE BEING KILLED WHILE SAVING YOUR LIFE, MY NEPHEW BETRAYED YOU BY ABANDONING YOU IN THE FOREST WHILE YOU WERE INJURED.*

TEHAG

SIMPLE QUESTION OF TUNING YOU'LL SOON GET USED TO IT.

YOU KNOW, ABOUT T3ALL... I KNOW THE TRUTH.

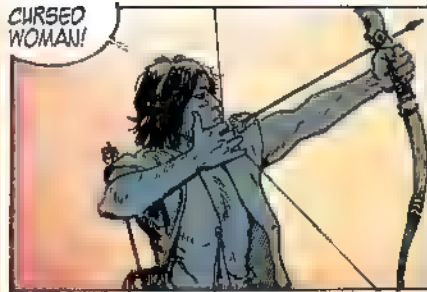
* SEE THE EYES OF TANATLOC.

KRISS OF VALNOR! YOU WENT TO SEE HER IN THAT CAVE WHERE SHE CLUTCHES HER GOLD LIKE A RAT TO A CORPSE, AND SHE TOLD YOU, IS THAT IT?

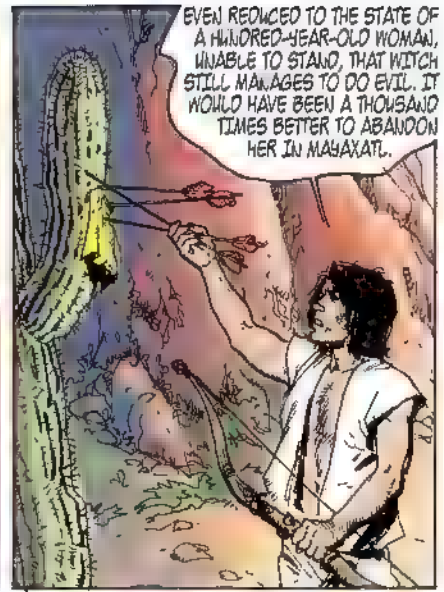
I... I WANTED TO KNOW WHAT REALLY HAPPENED.



CURSED WOMAN!



EVEN REDUCED TO THE STATE OF A HUNDRED-YEAR-OLD WOMAN, UNABLE TO STAND, THAT WITCH STILL MANAGES TO DO EVIL. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A THOUSAND TIMES BETTER TO ABANDON HER IN MAYAXATL.

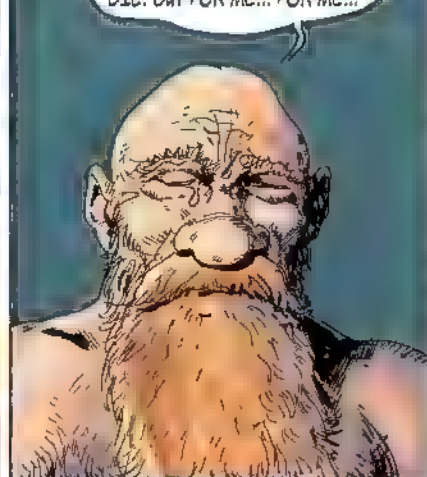


EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED TO US IS HER FAULT, TREE FOOT! EVERYTHING! INCLUDING YOUR NEPHEW'S "BETRAYAL." T'JALL WAS JUST A KID AND WENT ON TO PAY WELL BEYOND WHAT HE OWED FOR HIS MISTAKE.

IN YOUR EYES, PERHAPS. BUT IN HIS?...



HE ADMIRE YOU SO MUCH, THORGAL. COULD HE HAVE LIVED WITH THAT... INJURY? IT WAS CERTAINLY BETTER FOR HIM TO DIE. BUT FOR ME... FOR ME...



I'M SORRY, BUT... I'M SUDDENLY FEELING SO OLD... SO USELESS...



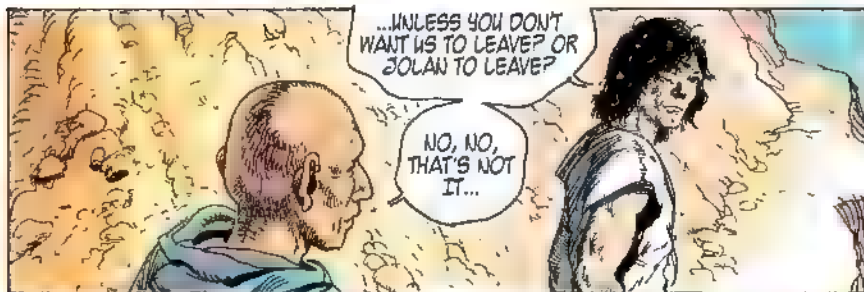
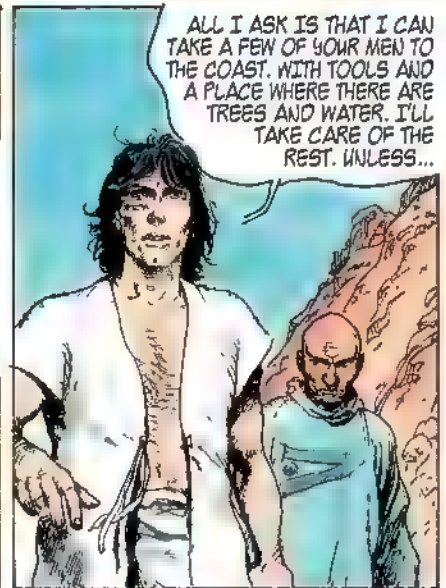
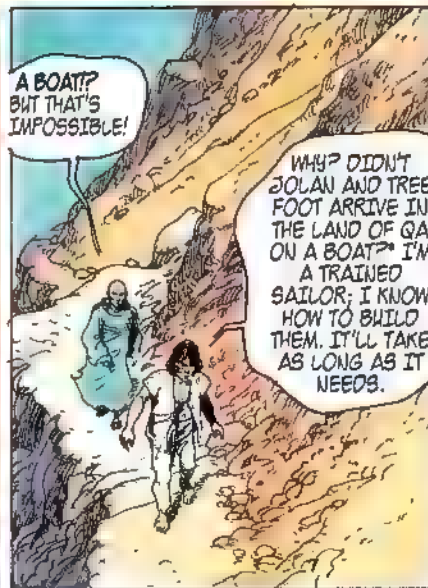
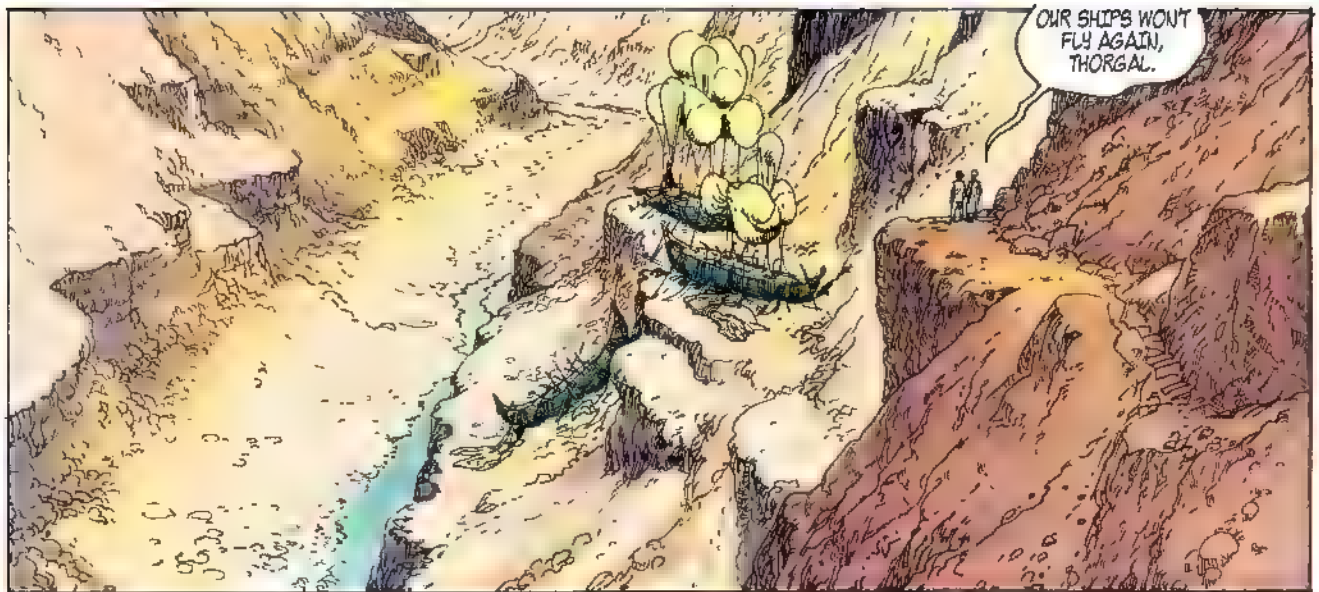
THE MEAL IS READY. WE MUST CALL THE MEN.

NOT RIGHT NOW, SPEHL-EGG.

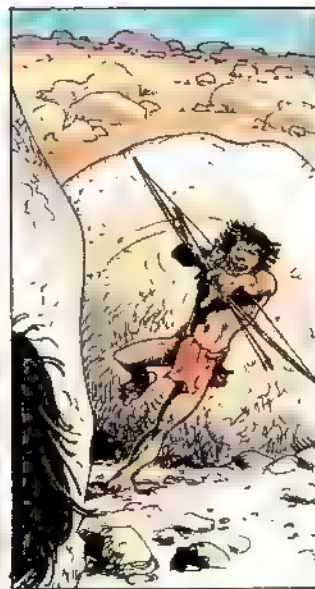
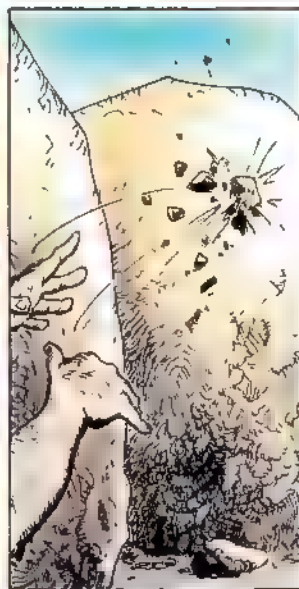
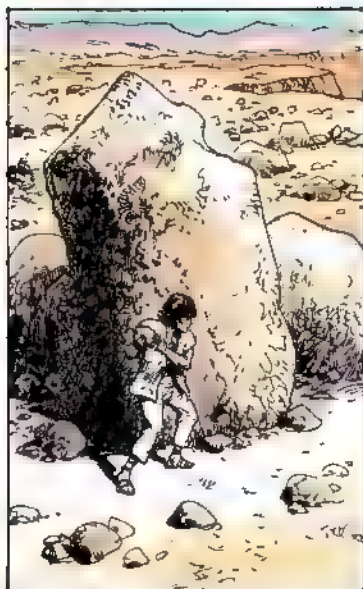
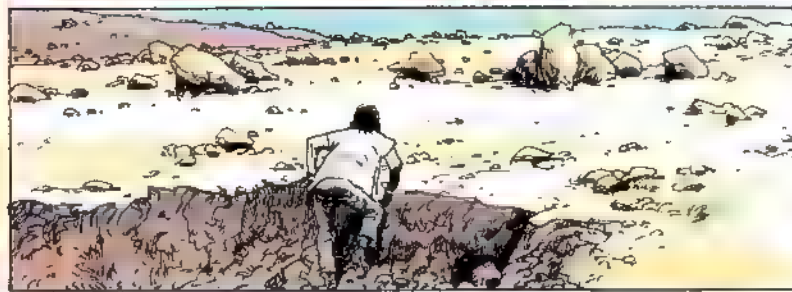
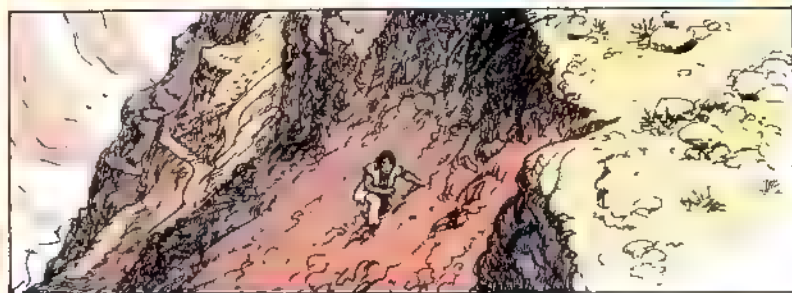
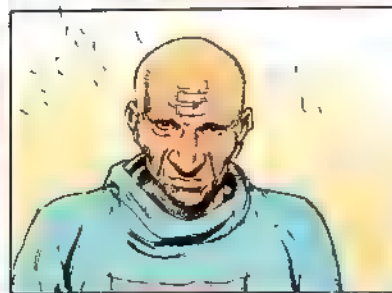
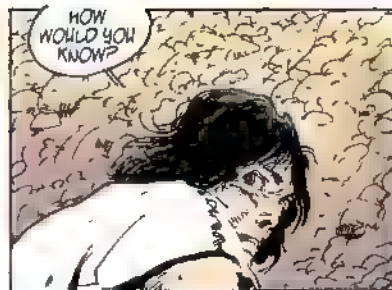
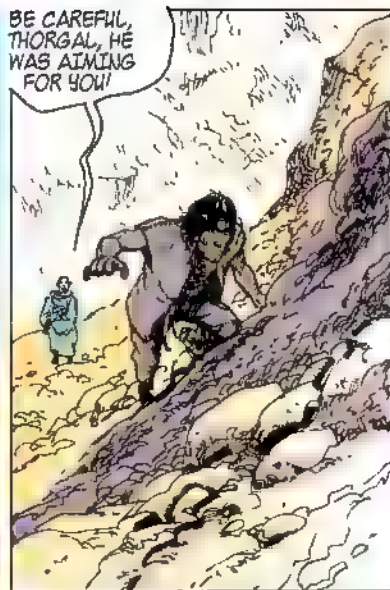
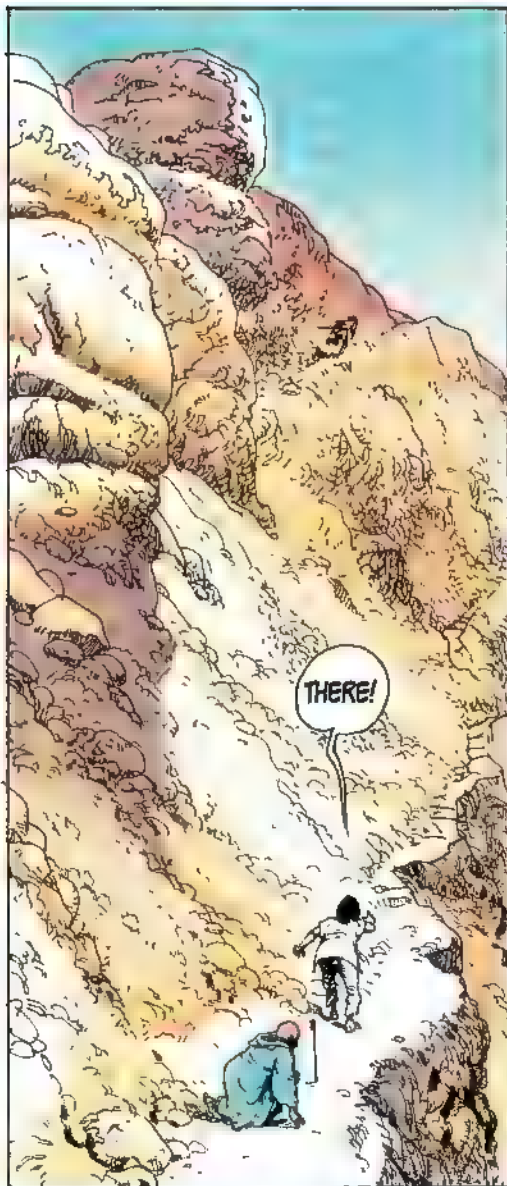


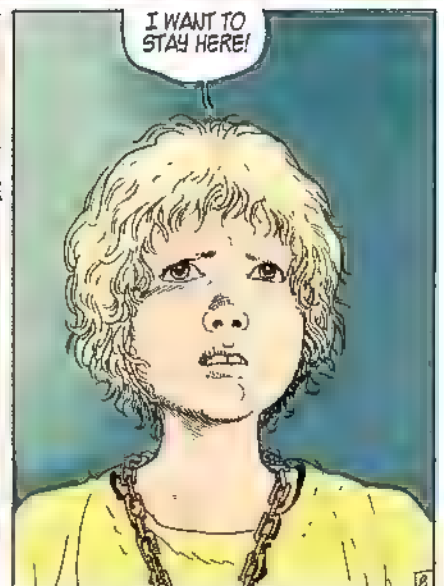
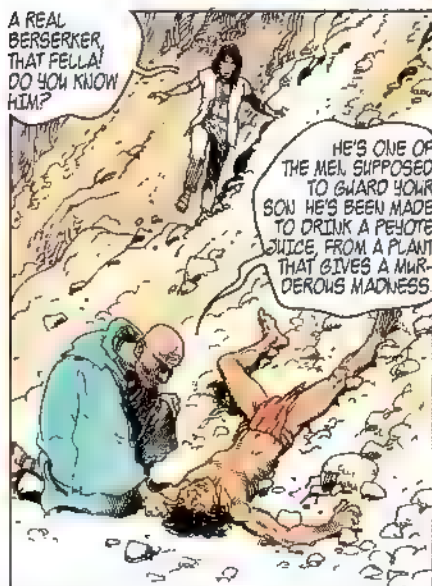
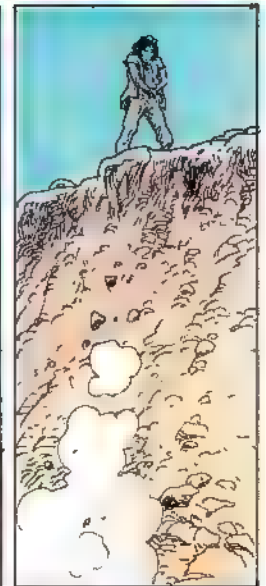
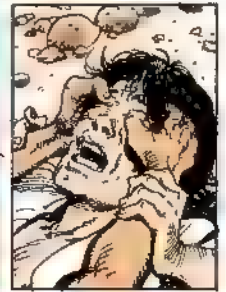
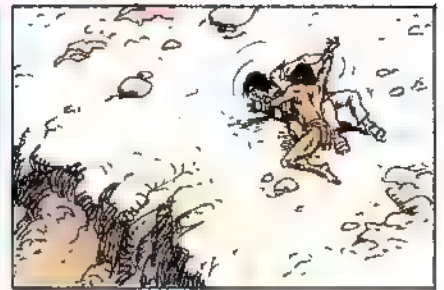
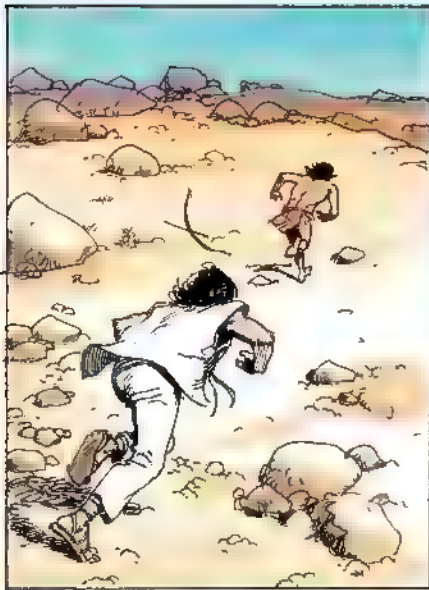
...LEAVE THEM A FEW MOMENTS TO REMEMBER A FALLEN FRIEND.

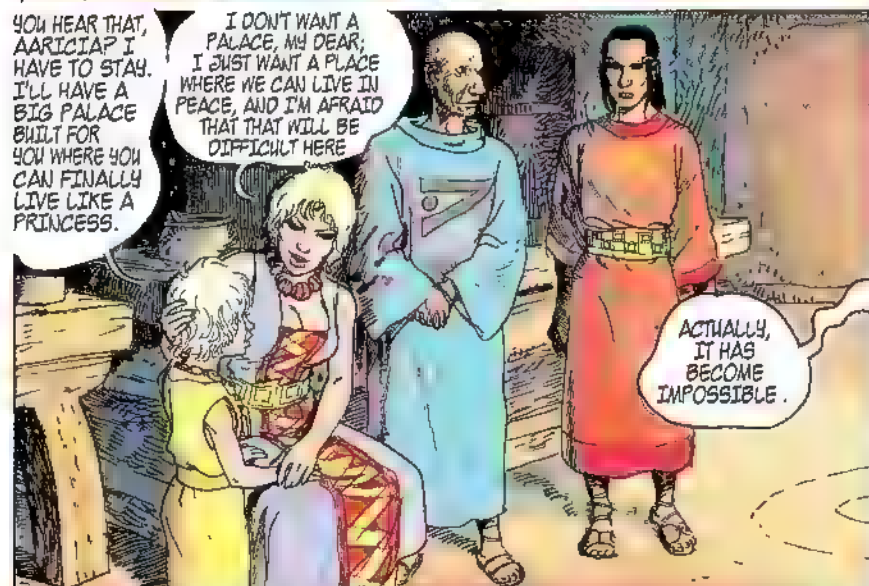
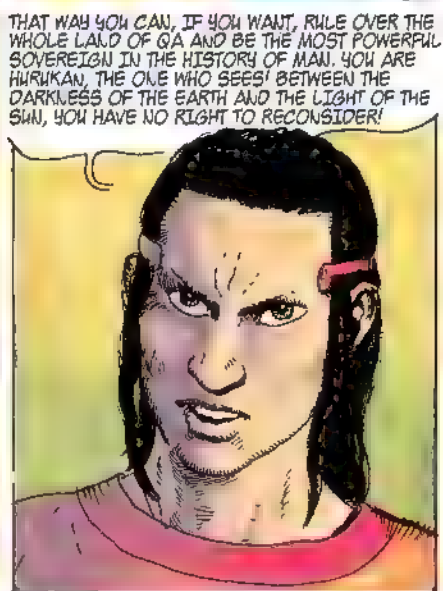
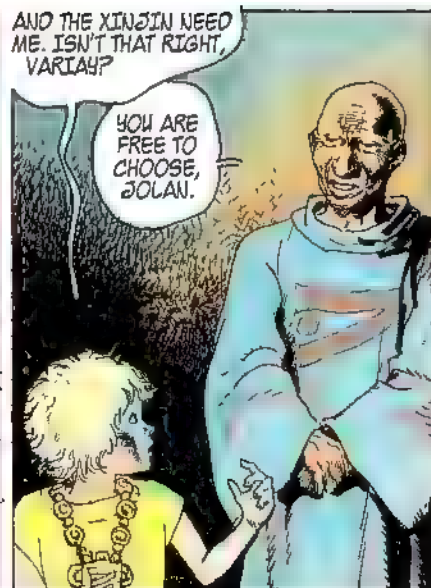
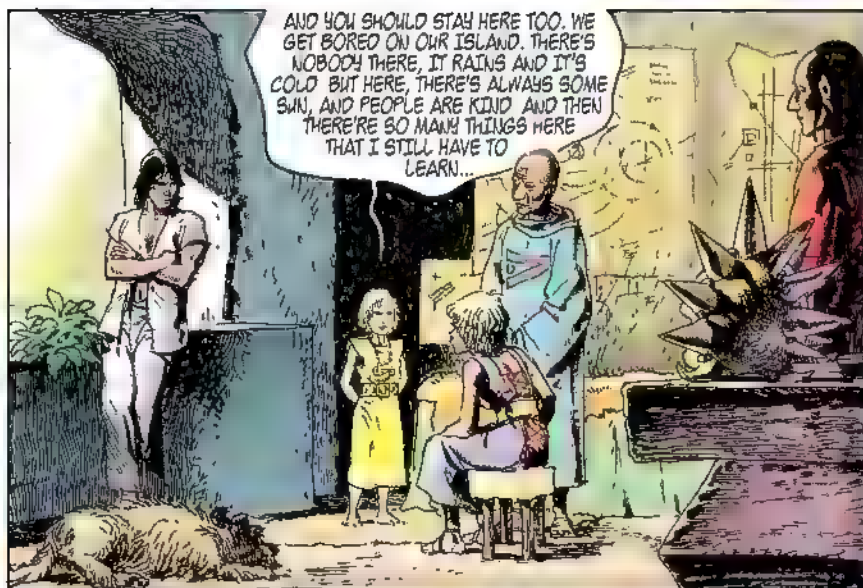


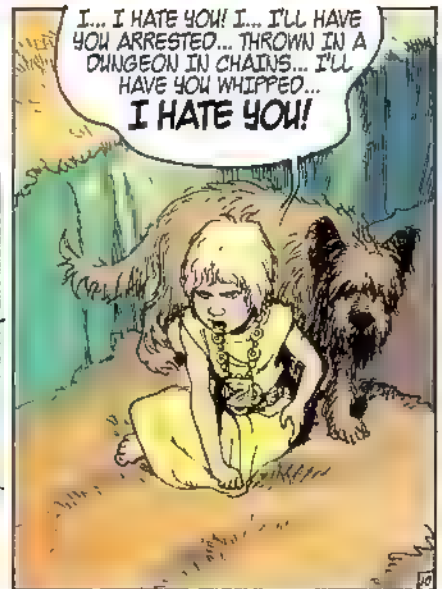
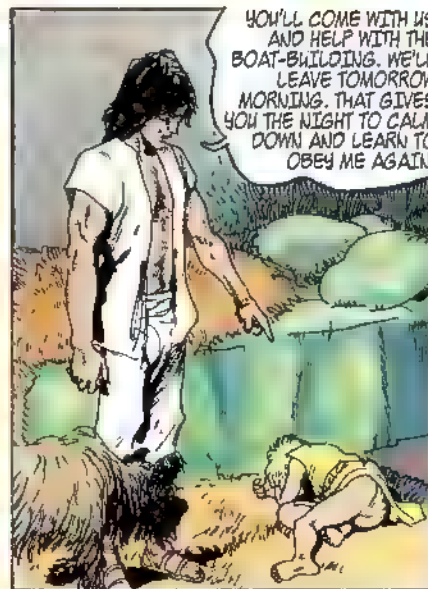
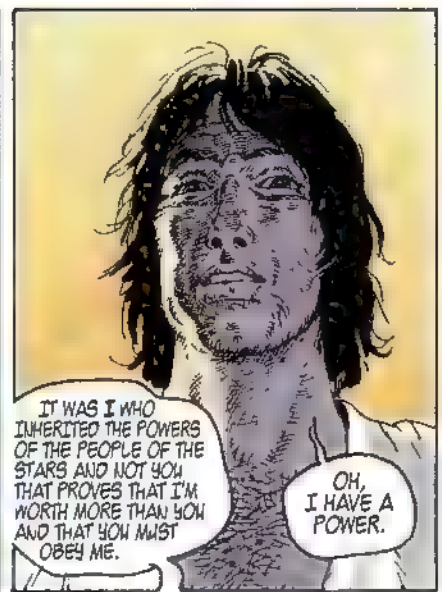
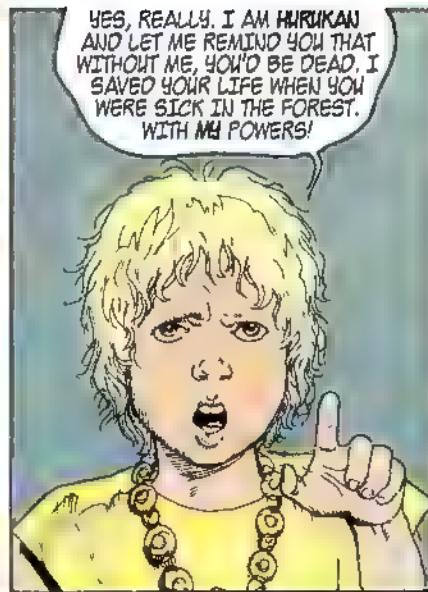


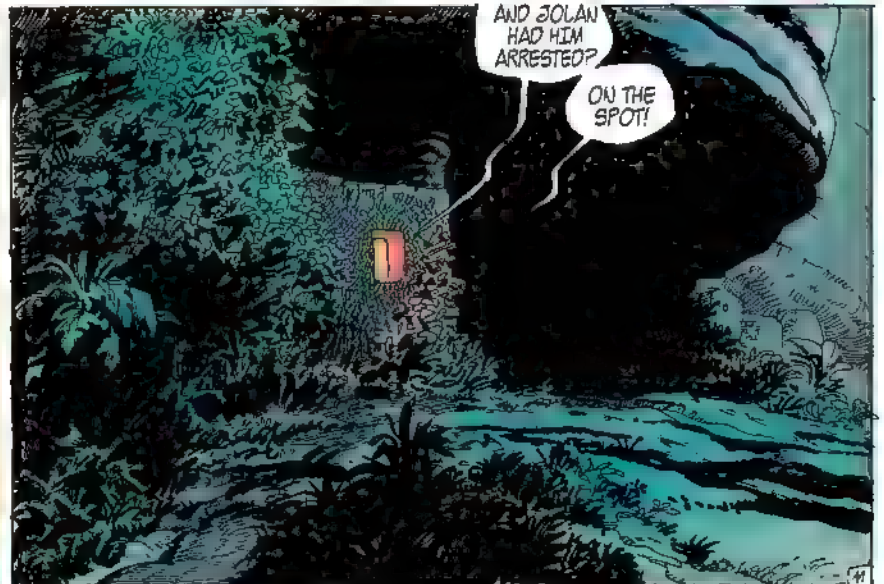
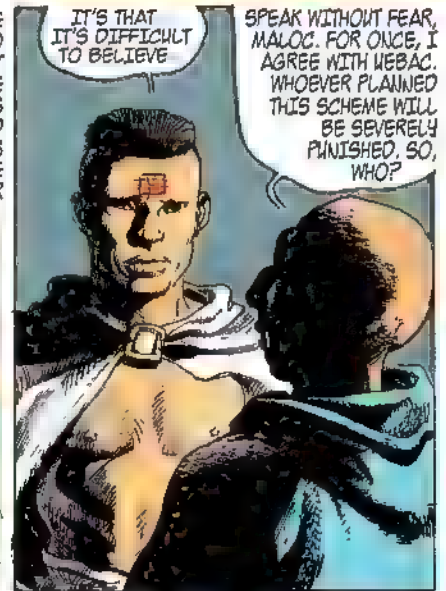
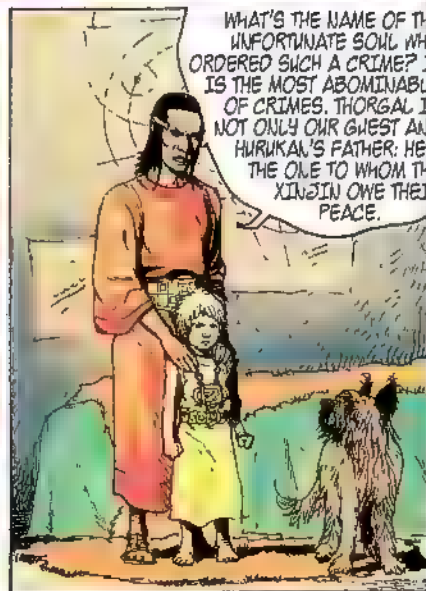
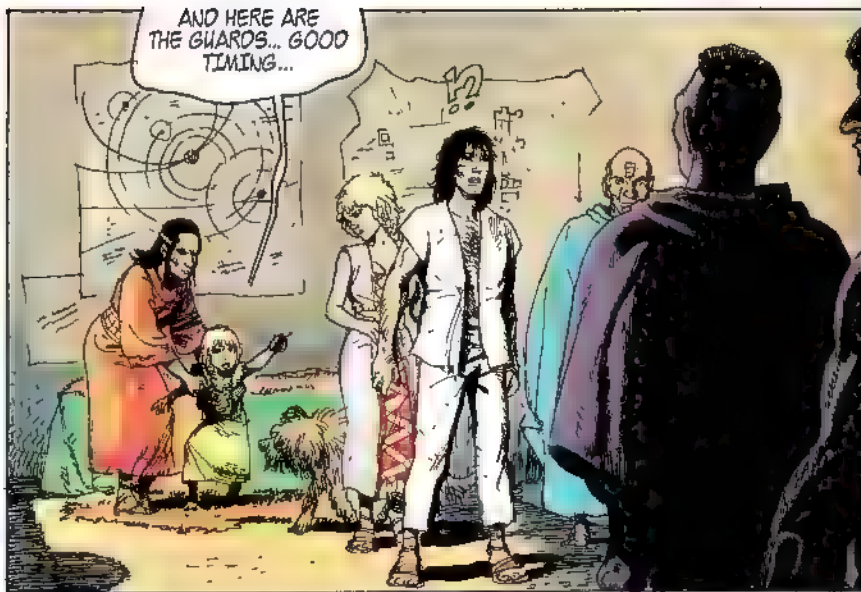
* SEE THE LAND OF QA

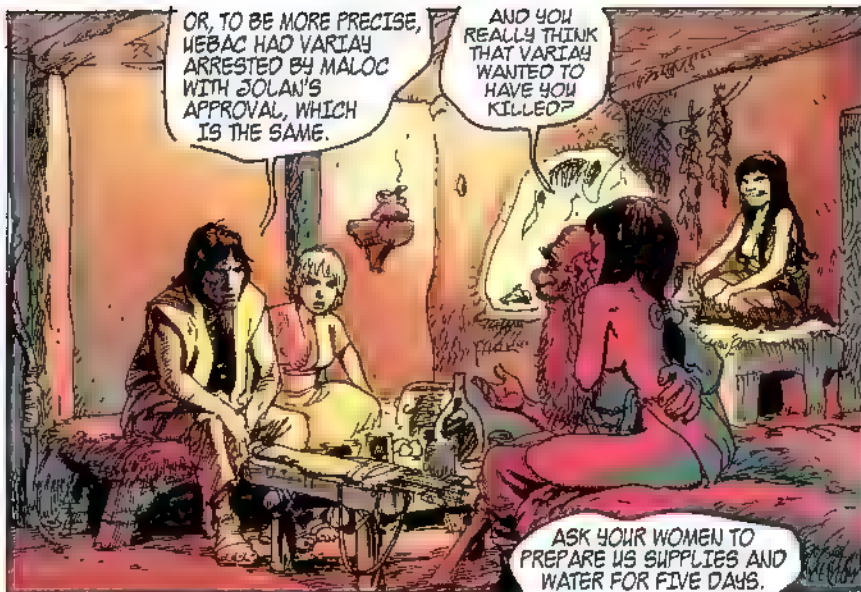












THAT WOULD SURPRISE ME. OTHERWISE, HE WAS HIDING HIS GAME WELL.

IT WAS PROBABLY A PLOT SET UP FROM START TO FINISH BY THE INTRIGUING WEBAC. WITH JOLAN'S INVOLUNTARY COMPLICITY, BEING MANIPULATED LIKE THE BOY HE IS.



TO TAKE POWER, OF COURSE. AS ALWAYS. WHICH MEANS THAT WE CAN'T WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW TREE FOOT. WE HAVE TO LEAVE HERE TONIGHT. ALL THREE OF US, PLUS JOLAN.



BUT WHAT WILL WE DO WHEN WE GET TO THE COAST?

WE'LL SEE. THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE WEBAC TRIES TO GET RID OF US AGAIN. AS FOR JOLAN...



I'LL GO GET HIM AS SOON AS WE'RE READY. AND I WOULDN'T ADVISE ANYONE TO TRY AND STOP ME.



AND VARIAY?

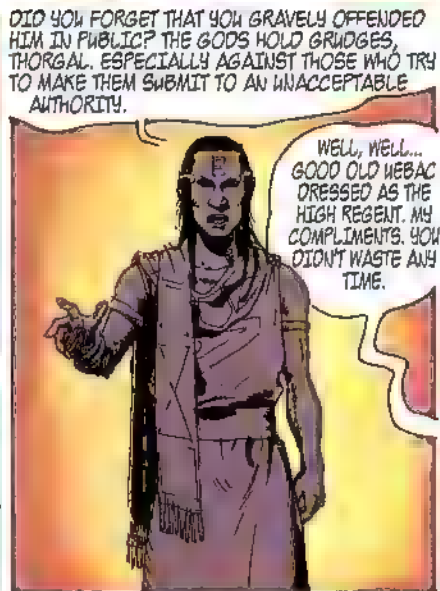
LET THE KINJIN FIGURE THAT OUT AMONG THEMSELVES, MY LOVE. WE OWE THEM NOTHING OTHER THAN SUFFERING AND TEARS.

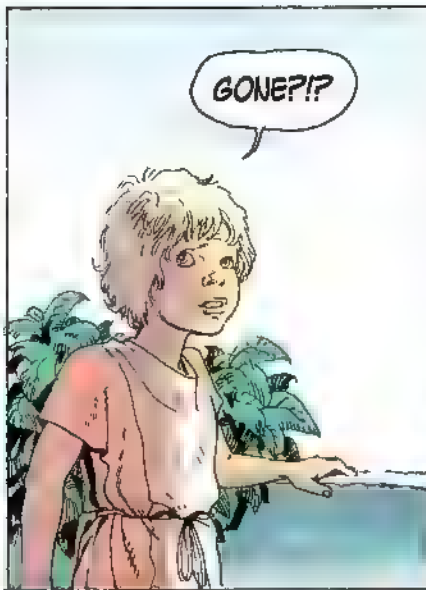
COME BACK, MY TURTLEDoves. LET ME EXPLAIN...



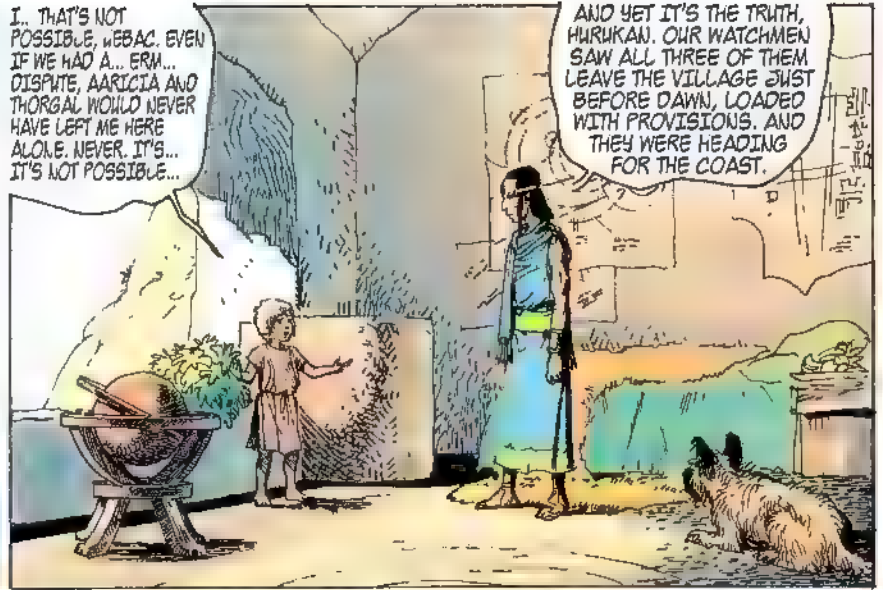
DON'T... AOW!







I... THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE, WEBAC. EVEN IF WE HAD A... ERM... DISPUTE, AARICIA AND THORGAL WOULD NEVER HAVE LEFT ME HERE ALONE. NEVER. IT'S... IT'S NOT POSSIBLE...

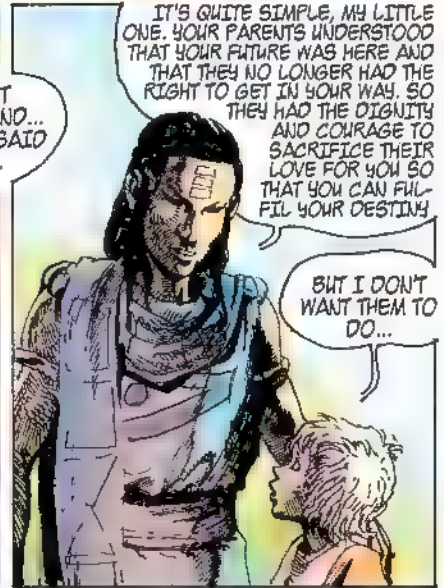


AND YET IT'S THE TRUTH, HURUKAN. OUR WATCHMEN SAW ALL THREE OF THEM LEAVE THE VILLAGE JUST BEFORE DAWN, LOADED WITH PROVISIONS. AND THEY WERE HEADING FOR THE COAST.



SEE FOR YOURSELF. THEY'VE TAKEN EVERYTHING—THEIR WEAPONS, THEIR CLOTHES, THEIR FOOD RESERVES, EVERYTHING.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND... THORGAL SAID THAT...



IT'S QUITE SIMPLE, MY LITTLE ONE. YOUR PARENTS UNDERSTOOD THAT YOUR FUTURE WAS HERE AND THAT THEY NO LONGER HAD THE RIGHT TO GET IN YOUR WAY. SO THEY HAD THE DIGNITY AND COURAGE TO SACRIFICE THEIR LOVE FOR YOU SO THAT YOU CAN FULFILL YOUR DESTINY.

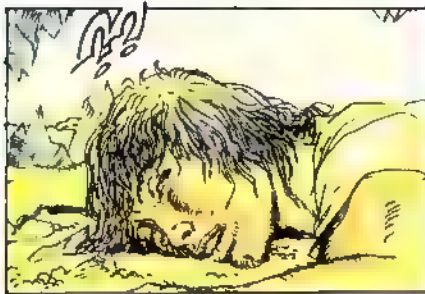
BUT I DON'T WANT THEM TO DO...



I DON'T WANT IT... I DON'T WANT IT...



TAKE LORD HURUKAN HOME. AND MAKE SURE THAT HE DOESN'T GO OUT WITHOUT MY AUTHORISATION.

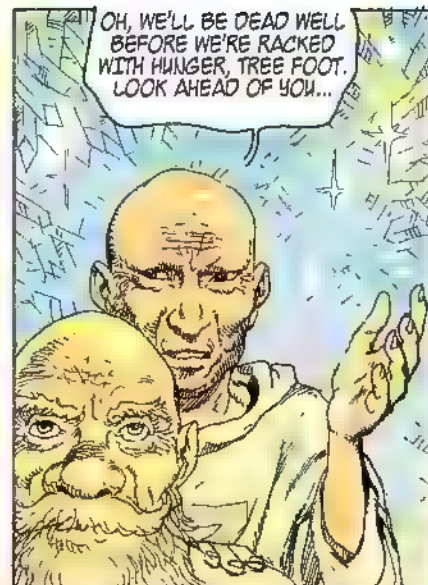


THE SUN'S MOUTH!

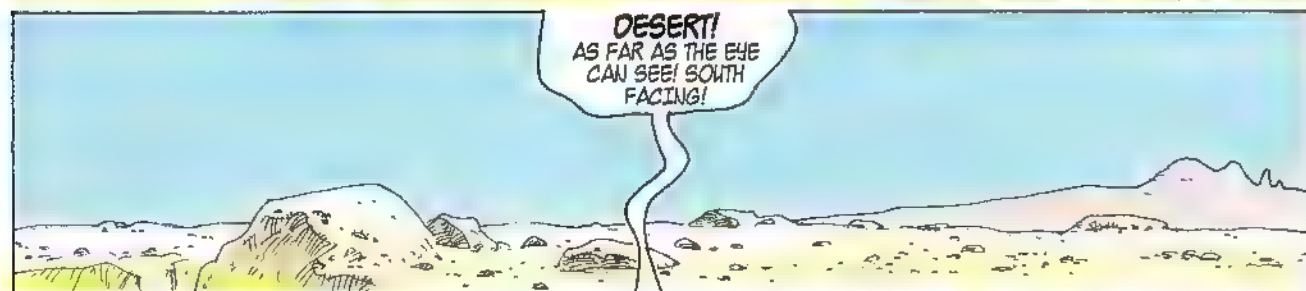
THIS IS WHERE THE KINJIN ABANDON THEIR CONDEMNED. THEY'RE HOISTED UP HERE BY TALL LADDERS AFTER HAVING BEEN KNOCKED OUT; THEN THE LADDERS ARE TAKEN AWAY.



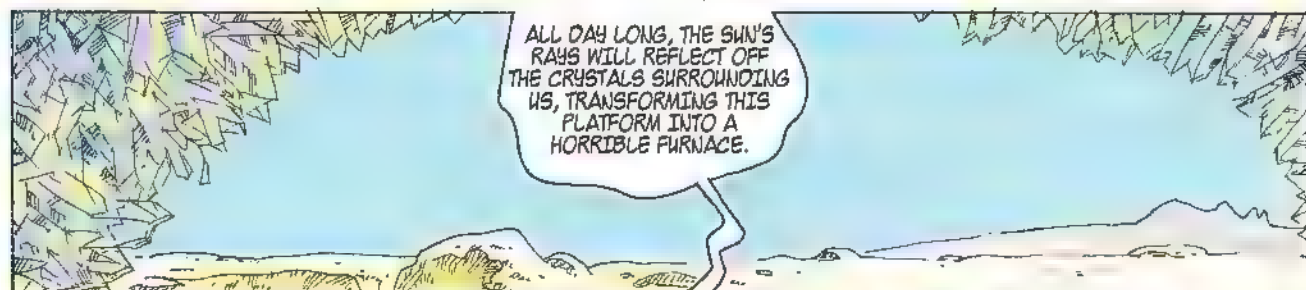
YOU MEAN THEY'LL LET US DIE OF HUNGER, IS THAT IT?



OH, WE'LL BE DEAD WELL BEFORE WE'RE RACKED WITH HUNGER, TREE FOOT. LOOK AHEAD OF YOU...



DESERT! AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE! SOUTH FACING!



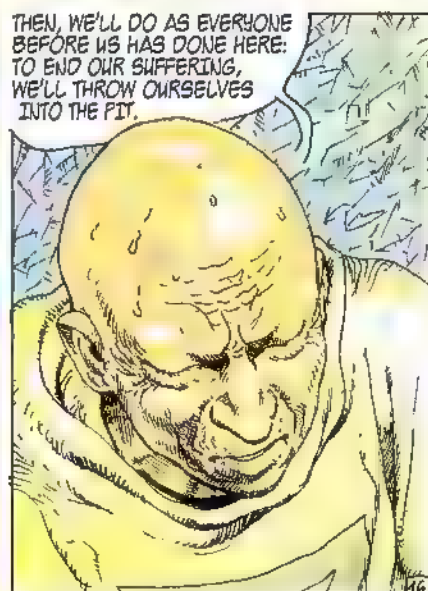
ALL DAY LONG, THE SUN'S RAYS WILL REFLECT OFF THE CRYSTALS SURROUNDING US, TRANSFORMING THIS PLATFORM INTO A HORRIBLE FURNACE.



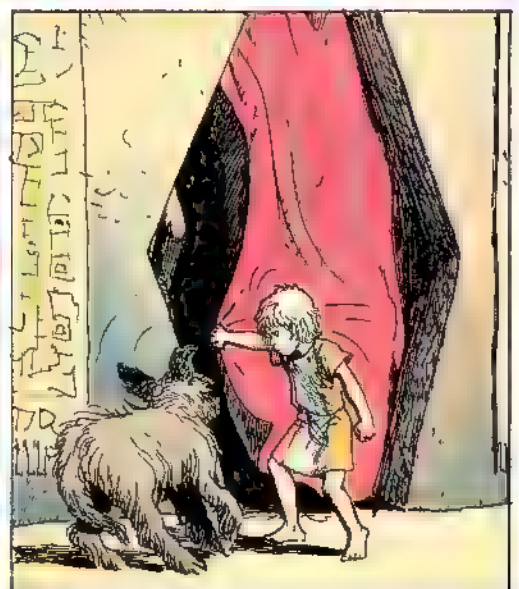
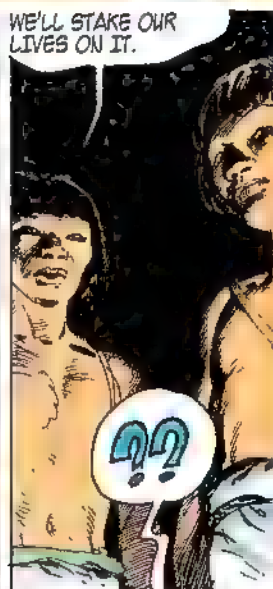
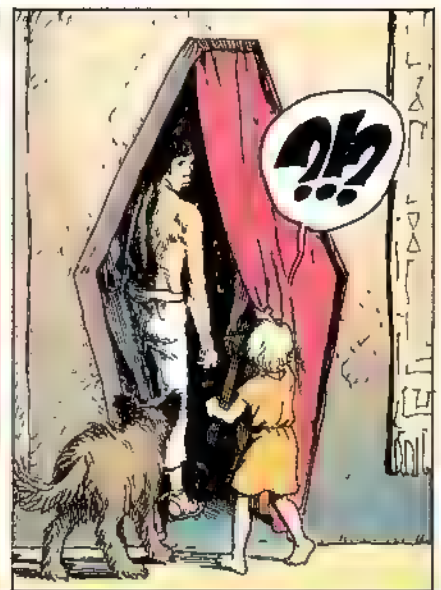
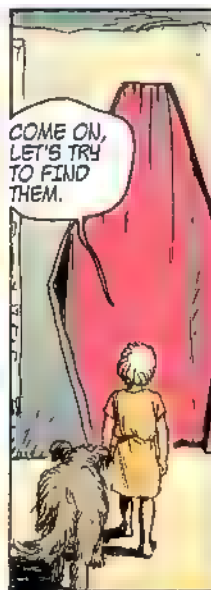
THE HEAT WILL SLOWLY RISE UNTIL IT'S UNBEARABLE, DRAWING ALL WATER FROM OUR BODIES. AND THE DAZZLING LIGHT WILL BLIND US.



OUR SKIN WILL BURN AND OUR BLOOD WILL BOIL; THEN OUR BRAINS WILL START TO MELT AND WE'LL GO MAD.



THEN, WE'LL DO AS EVERYONE BEFORE US HAS DONE HERE: TO END OUR SUFFERING, WE'LL THROW OURSELVES INTO THE PIT.





A SECRET PASSAGE!
COME ON, MUFF, LET'S
GO! THERE MUST BE AN
EXIT SOMEWHERE. WE'LL
OUTSMART WEBAC.

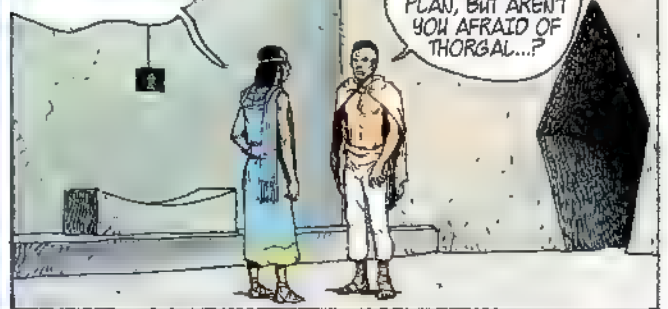


HE'S JUST A
KID, MALOC. I'VE
BEEN COAXING
HIM AND TAKING
CARE OF HIM
FOR WEEKS

AS SOON AS HE GETS USED TO THE IDEA
THAT HIS PARENTS HAVE ABANDONED
HIM, HE'LL NATURALLY SWITCH HIS NEED
FOR TRUST AND AFFECTION TO ME. NOW
THAT VARIAY IS ELIMINATED, THANKS
TO YOU, I CAN DO WHAT I WANT. AND
THE KINJIN WILL BE FORCED TO
BOW BEFORE THE DECISIONS
OF LORD HURUKAN.



SO WE CAN MARCH ON
MAYAXATL, BRING THE
CHAAM AND THE OTHER
TRIBES UNDER THE SOLE
AUTHORITY OF HURUKAN,
DOUBLE HEIR OF TANATLOC
AND OGOTAI, AND DOMINATE
THE WHOLE LAND OF GA.
I, WEBAC, WILL BE THE
GRAND MASTER! AND YOU,
MALOC, YOU'LL COMMAND
ALL THE WEAPONS!



HMMM...
AN AMBITIOUS
PLAN, BUT AREN'T
YOU AFRAID OF
THORGAL...?

HE'S NOT AN
ORDINARY MAN.
I'D FEEL A LOT
MORE AT EASE
IF WE KILLED
HIM STRAIGHT
AWAY.

AND RISK JOLAN
FINDING OUT? COME
ON, MALOC, HAVE YOU
EVER SEEN ANYONE
SURVIVE IN THE SUN'S
MOUTH?...

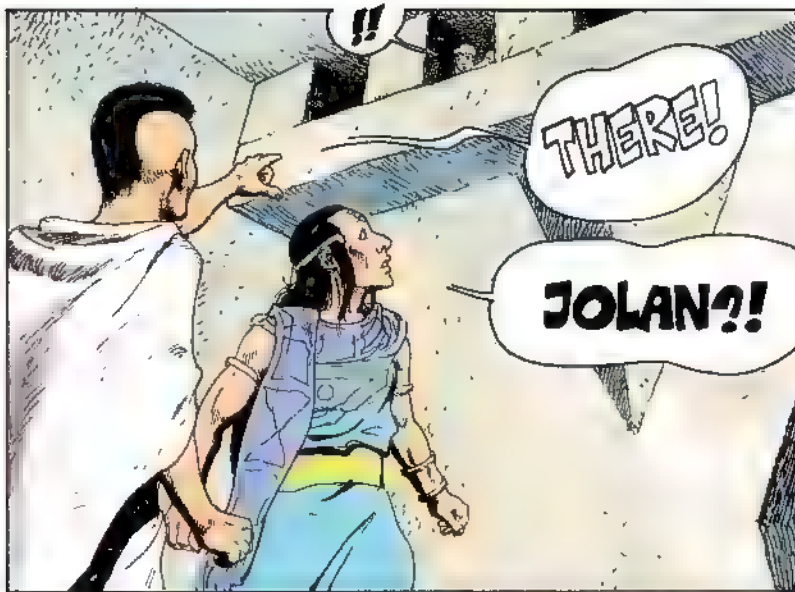


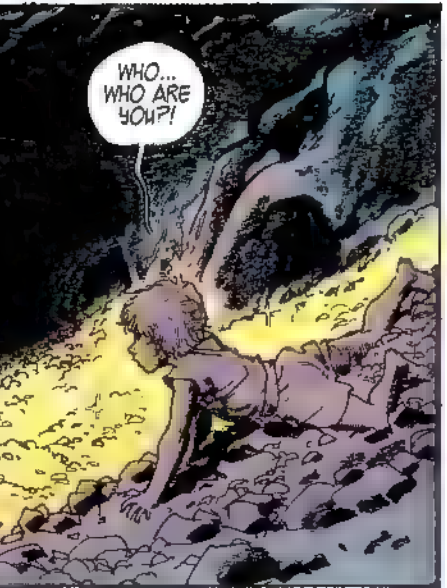
VARIAY AND THE
THREE FOREIGNERS
WILL BE DEAD BEFORE
TOMORROW EVENING.
AND IN A FEW DAYS,
THE VULTURES WILL
HAVE LEFT NOTHING OF
THEM BUT ANONYMOUS
SKELETONS, WHOSE
BONES WE'LL SPREAD
THROUGH THE
DESERT.

YES,
BUT...

SILENCE!
DID YOU HEAR
SOMETHING?





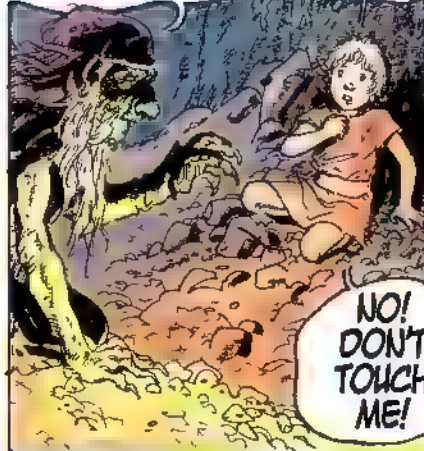


IT WAS KIND OF YOU
TO VISIT ME, SWEETIE.
YOU'RE JOLAN, AREN'T
YOU? THE SON OF THORGAL
AND DEAR AARICIA. THE
ONE THE SAVAGES HERE
CALL HURUKAN?

WHO...
WHO ARE
YOU?

WHAT, DON'T YOU RECOGNISE
ME? YOU'VE NEVER SEEN ME
BEFORE, THAT'S TRUE. AND I
HAVEN'T HAD THE HONOUR OF
BEING RECEIVED IN YOUR
"PALACE"

KRISS OF
VALNOR!...
BUT
HOW?...



NO!
DON'T
TOUCH
ME!



WHY ARE YOU AFRAID OF ME,
JOLAN? WASN'T IT THANKS TO ME THAT
YOU BECAME A LIVING GOD FOR THE
XINGJIN? DIDN'T I BRING YOU OGOTAI'S
MAGIC HEADPIECE AFTER COMPLETING
MY PERILOUS MISSION? AND, AS
THANKS, I'M LEFT TO ROT
HERE LIKE A DOG...



"WHAT ARE YOU COMPLAINING
ABOUT?" SAID THAT VULTURE
VARIAT. "YOU WANTED GOLD
FOR YOUR MISSION? A LOT
OF GOLD? HELP YOURSELF—
THIS MINE'S FULL OF IT..."

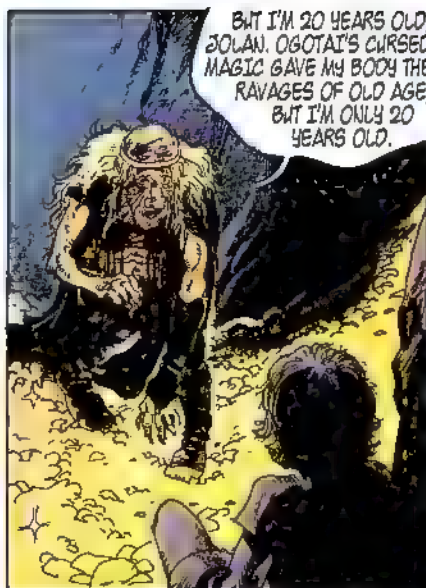


GOLD, JOLAN!
THOUSANDS OF POUNDS OF
RAW GOLD! AND ALL
THIS GOLD IS MINE!
MINE, ALL MINE!

BUT WHAT'S THE POINT
IN HAVING ALL THAT
GOLD IF YOU'RE TOO
OLD TO CARRY IT?



TOO
OLD?...



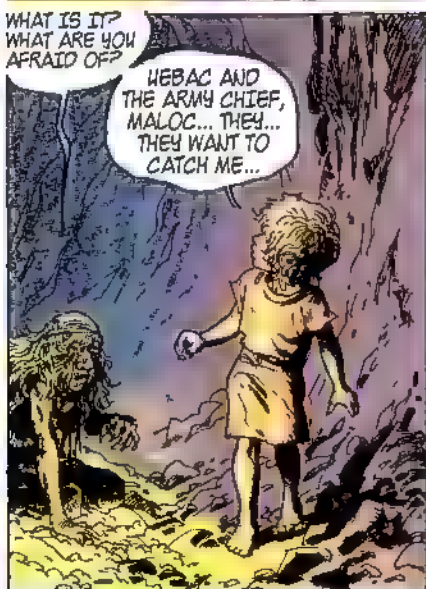
BUT I'M 20 YEARS OLD, JOLAN. OGOTAI'S CURSED MAGIC GAVE MY BODY THE RAVAGES OF OLD AGE, BUT I'M ONLY 20 YEARS OLD.



TWENTY YEARS OLD, HOW HEAR ME? I'M NOT OLD, I'M 20 YEARS OLD! TWENTY! TWENTY!



SHHH... BE QUIET!



WHAT IS IT? WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

WEBAC AND THE ARMY CHIEF, MALOC... THEY... THEY WANT TO CATCH ME...



I HEARD THAT THEY'D LOCKED THORGAL, AARICIA AND TREE FOOT IN A PLACE THEY CALL THE "SUN'S MOUTH," WHERE THEY'LL DIE. I DON'T KNOW WHERE IT IS, BUT... THEY HAVE TO BE SET FREE.

HEE HEE HEE...

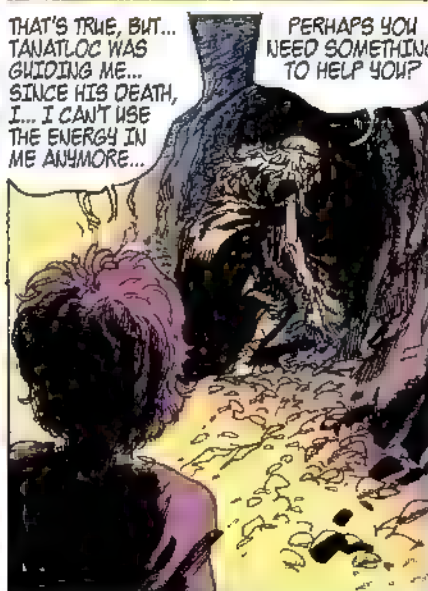


SO OUR TURTLEDOWNS HAVE BEEN TRAPPED TOO, HEE HEE... BUT I DON'T REALLY SEE HOW I COULD HELP YOU, SWEETIE. I CAN'T EVEN STAND UP ON MY OWN, UNLESS...

UNLESS?



YOU'RE FROM THE SAME RACE AS OGOTAI... AND I'VE HEARD OF YOUR POWERS. DIDN'T YOU MANAGE TO HEAL THORGAL FROM A DISTANCE WHEN HE WAS SICK AND INJURED IN THE FOREST?



THAT'S TRUE, BUT... TANATLOC WAS GUIDING ME... SINCE HIS DEATH, I... I CAN'T USE THE ENERGY IN ME ANYMORE...

PERHAPS YOU NEED SOMETHING TO HELP YOU?



THIS, FOR EXAMPLE!

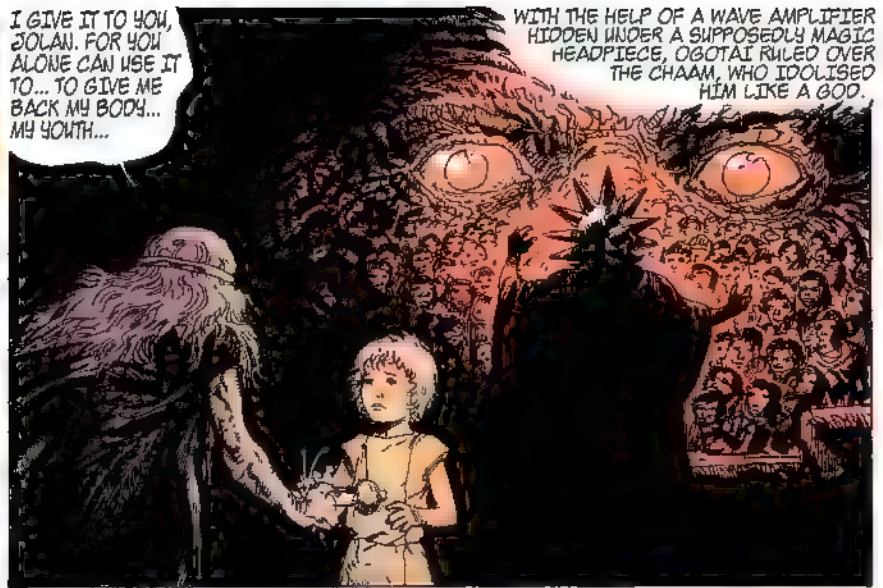
SEE THE EYES OF TANATLOC.

WHAT'S THAT?
LOOKS LIKE
SOME KIND OF
CROWN.

I DON'T KNOW. I
FOUND IT INSIDE
OGOTAI'S HEAD-
PIECE... I KEPT IT...
HMMM... JUST IN
CASE.

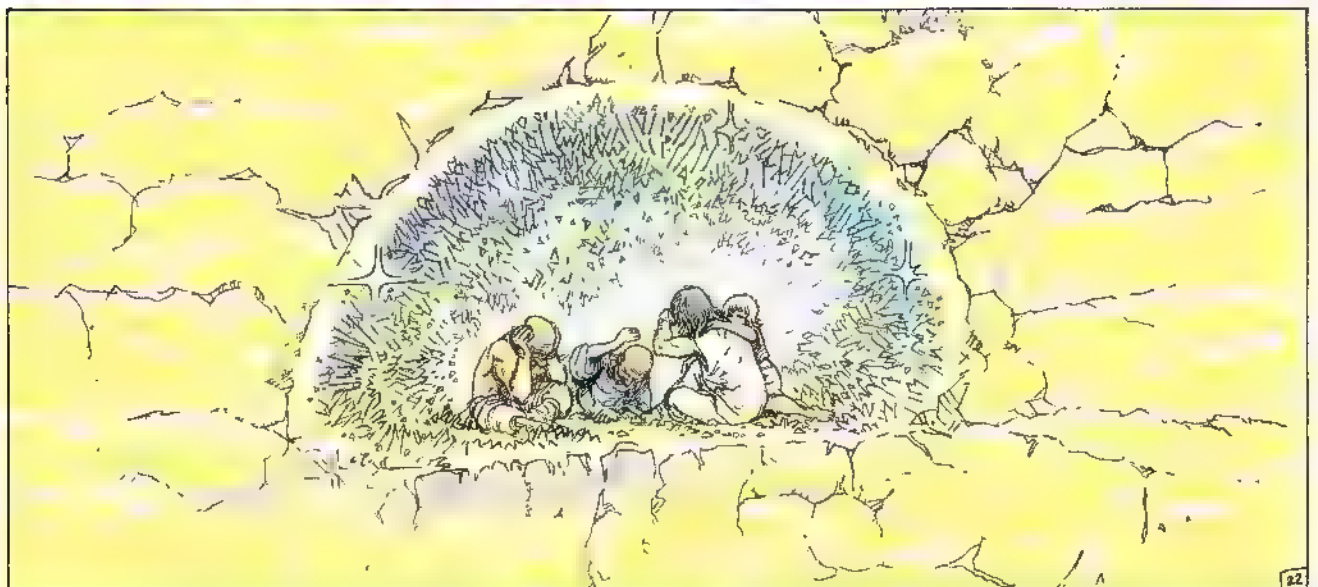
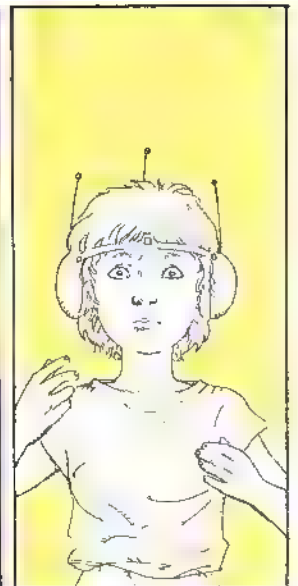
I GIVE IT TO YOU,
JOLAN. FOR YOU
ALONE CAN USE IT
TO... TO GIVE ME
BACK MY BODY...
MY YOUTH...

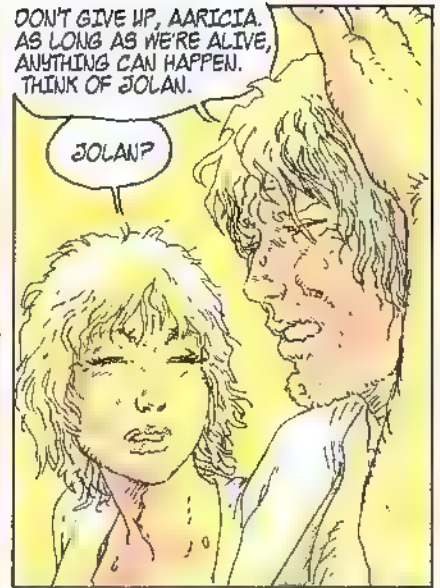
WITH THE HELP OF A WAVE AMPLIFIER
HIDDEN UNDER A SUPPOSEDLY MAGIC
HEADPIECE, OGOTAI RULED OVER
THE CHAAM, WHO IDOLISED
HIM LIKE A GOD.



I... I
DON'T
KNOW
IF I...

TRY, JOLAN. IN EXCHANGE,
I'LL HELP YOU TO FREE
THORGAL AND AARTICIA,
I PROMISE YOU. AND I'LL
DEFEND YOU AGAINST HEBAC.
TRY, I BEG YOU...
I BEG YOU...

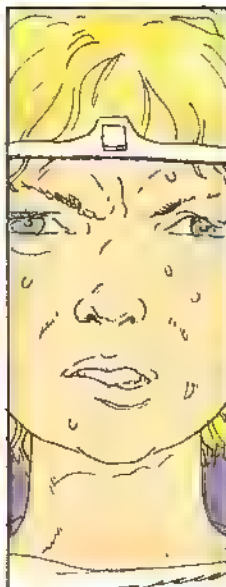
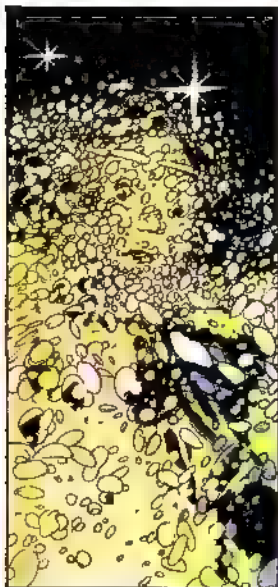




THE SECRET OF KNOWLEDGE,
JOLAN, IS THAT EVERYTHING AROUND US
IS IN THE IMAGE OF THE UNIVERSE. EVERY
BEING, EVERY THING IS SEEMINGLY COMPOSED OF
MILLIONS OF STARS, INVISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE
AND LINKED TO EACH OTHER BY ENORMOUS
FORCES THROUGH IMMENSE VOIDS.

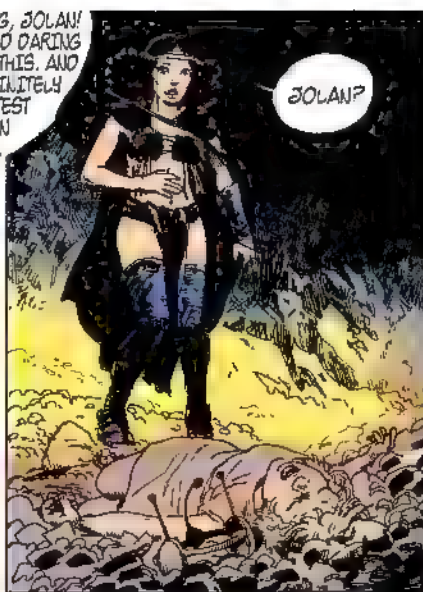
LATER, JOLAN,
YOU'LL LEARN TO SEE
THE STARS. YOU'LL UNDERSTAND
THAT THEY ARE ALL THE SAME AND
THAT IT'S THE DIFFERENT WAYS THEY
ARE ASSEMBLED THAT GIVES THINGS
AND BEINGS DIFFERENT
NATURES AND SHAPES.

YOU'LL LEARN TO FEEL
AND TO MASTER THE ENERGY
CURRENTS THAT ARE WITHIN YOU
AND THAT YOU HAVE INHERITED FROM
THE WORLD WHERE YOU COME FROM.
THIS ENERGY IS LARGER THAN THE
FORCE LINKING THE STARS AND
THINGS TOGETHER. YOU WILL BE ABLE
TO TRANSFORM THE VERY NATURE
OF ALL MATERIAL AT WILL!





IT'S AMAZING, JOLAN!
I HAD STOPPED DARING
TO HOPE FOR THIS. AND
YOU ARE DEFINITELY
THE GREATEST
MAGICIAN
I'VE...



JOLAN?



POOR KID. WHAT AN
AMAZING EXPENDITURE OF
ENERGY HE MUST HAVE GONE
THROUGH TO ACHIEVE WHAT
HE DID. BUT FIRST, LET'S
HIDE THIS...

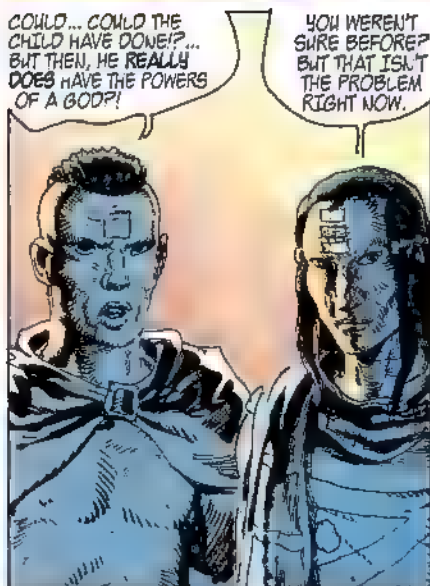
THERE
HE IS!



BUT... WHO'S THAT
WOMAN?

I CAN HARDLY
BELIEVE IT
COULD IT BE?

KRISS OF VALNOR, NOT AT
YOUR SERVICE, MY FRIENDS!
AND WHO HAS NO INTENTION
WHATSOEVER OF GETTING IN THE
WAY OF YOUR PLANS. ALL THAT I ASK
OF THE NEW XIJINJ MASTER IS FIVE
DAYS OF SUPPLIES AND THE TWO
CHARIOTS THE XIJINJ PROMISED
ME, TO TAKE MY GOLD FAR
AWAY FROM HERE



COULD... COULD THE
CHILD HAVE DONE?...
BUT THEN, HE REALLY
DOES HAVE THE POWERS
OF A GOD?

YOU WEREN'T
SURE BEFORE?
BUT THAT ISN'T
THE PROBLEM
RIGHT NOW.



I FIND YOU VERY
ARROGANT, WOMAN!
I HAVE OTHER PLANS
FOR THIS GOLD, YOU
KNOW. ARREST HER,
MALOC!

I SEE THAT
YOU'RE AS
DIRTY A PLAYER
AS I AM,
WEBAC. TOO
BAD FOR
YOU...

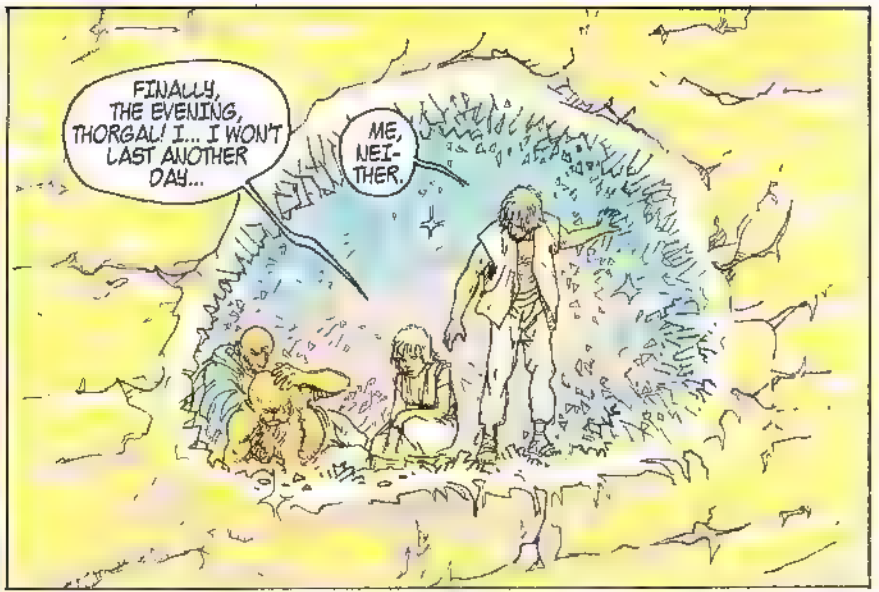


...AS I HAVE A TRUMP
CARD IN MY
GAME!

OUCH!
WHAT
THE?...
26



SO, IF YOU APPRECIATE YOUR GOD HURUKAN'S LIFE, I'D ADVISE YOU TO COMPLY EXACTLY WITH MY TERMS!



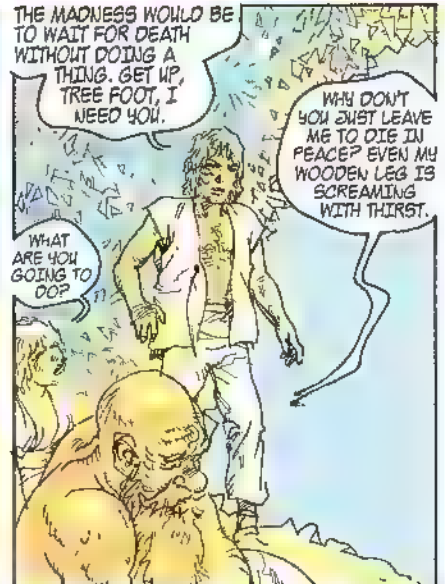
FINALLY, THE EVENING, THORGAL! I... I WON'T LAST ANOTHER DAY...

ME, NEITHER.



WE HAVE TO TRY SOMETHING BEFORE WE HAVE NO STRENGTH LEFT.

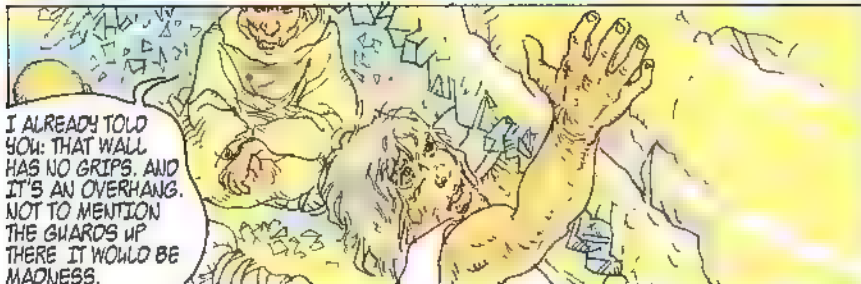
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, THORGAL.



THE MADNESS WOULD BE TO WAIT FOR DEATH WITHOUT DOING A THING. GET UP, TREE FOOT, I NEED YOU.

WHY DON'T YOU JUST LEAVE ME TO DIE IN PEACE? EVEN MY WOODEN LEG IS SCREAMING WITH THIRST.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?



I ALREADY TOLD YOU: THAT WALL HAS NO GRIPS. AND IT'S AN OVERHANG. NOT TO MENTION THE GUARDS UP THERE IT WOULD BE MADNESS.



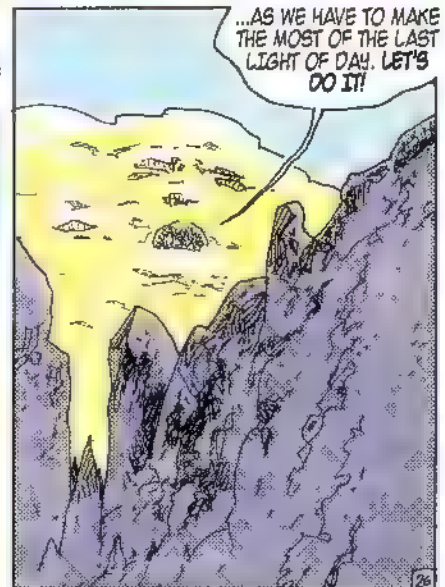
HEY...

YOU'LL LET YOURSELF LEAN BACK AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE OUTSIDE AND I'LL CLIMB ON YOUR SHOULDERS TO TRY AND PASS THE OVERHANG. VARIAN AND AARICIA WILL HOLD YOU BY AN ARM EACH.

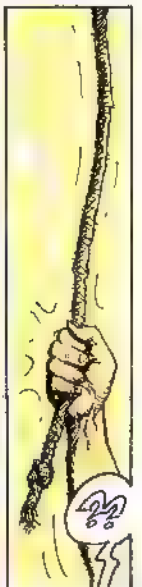
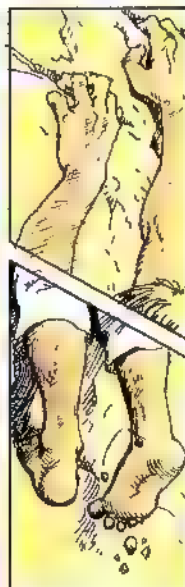
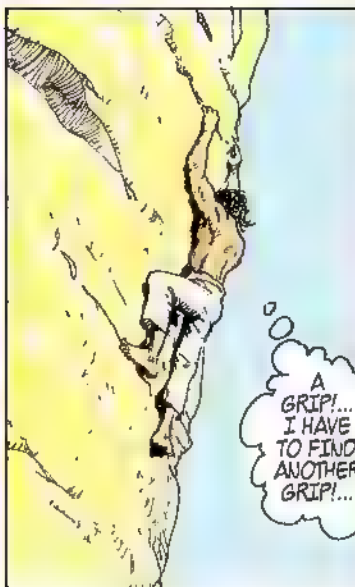
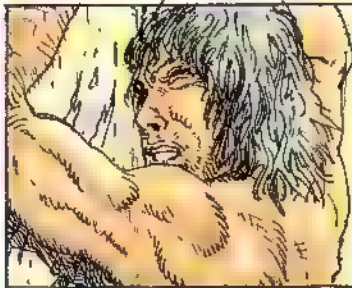
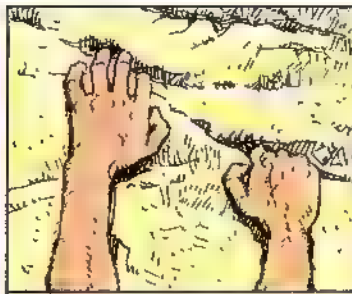


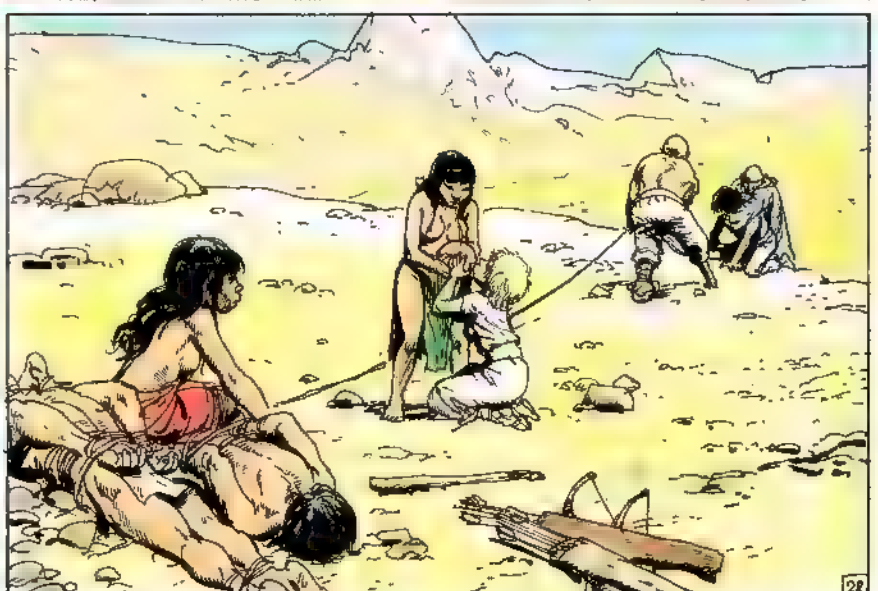
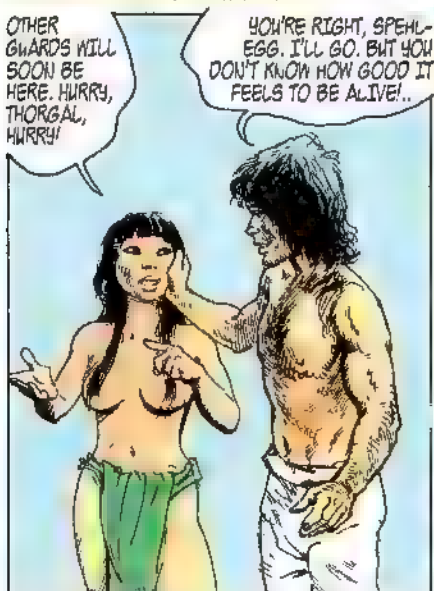
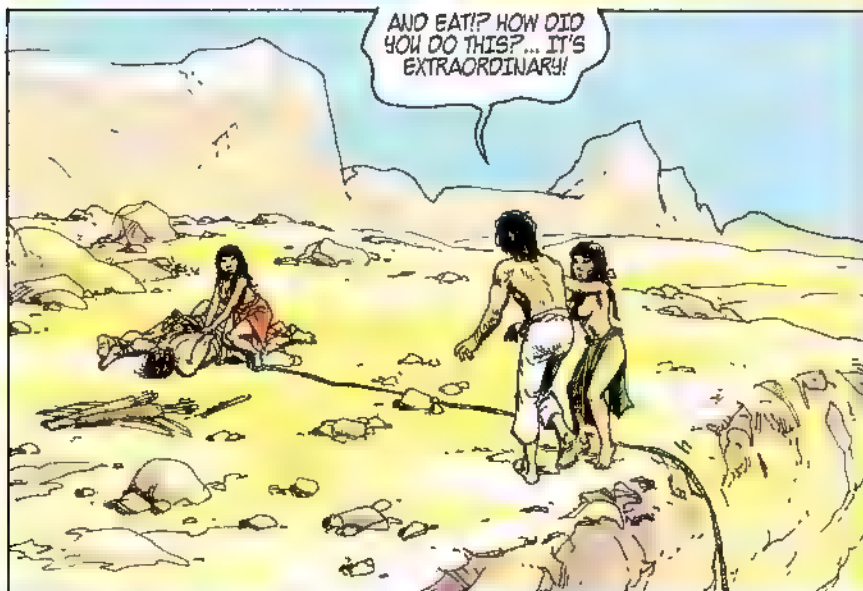
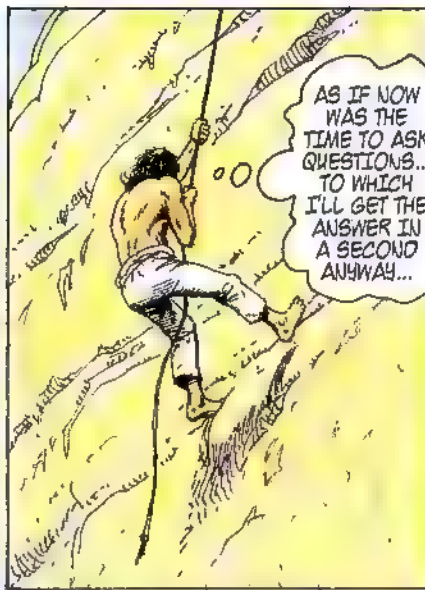
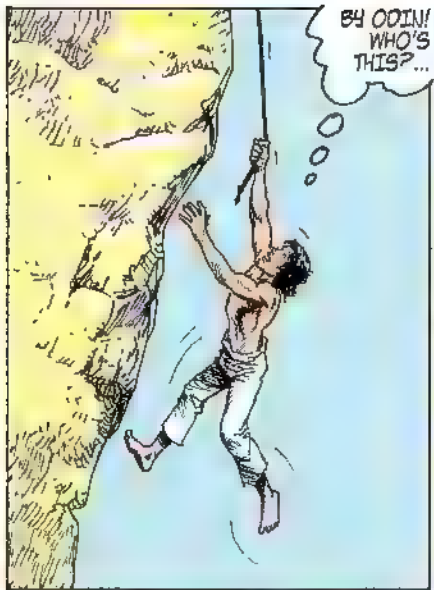
THORGAL, YOU'LL...

IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE, MY LOVE; AS SMALL AS IT IS, I WANT TO TAKE IT AND WE HAVEN'T GOT TIME FOR LONG FAREWELLS...



...AS WE HAVE TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE LAST LIGHT OF DAY. LET'S DO IT!







IT'S INCREDIBLE! ACCORDING TO SPEHL-EGG AND EAT, KRISS OF VALNOR LEFT THE VILLAGE YESTERDAY AT NOON. WITH JOLAN.

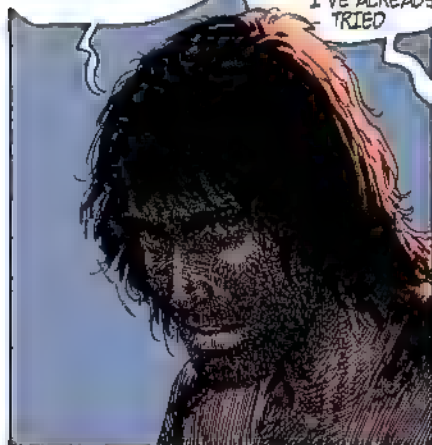
BUT HOW COULD SHE?...

SHE'S YOUNG AGAIN. WE DON'T KNOW HOW. AND SHE TOOK JOLAN AS A HOSTAGE TO GET SUPPLIES AND TWO CHARIOTS, ON WHICH SHE LOADED HER GOLD. SHE LEFT IN THE DIRECTION OF THE COAST. OF COURSE, WEBAC HAD HER FOLLOWED AT A DISTANCE TO TAKE BACK JOLAN AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY.



SO WE DON'T HAVE AN HOUR TO LOSE, TREE FOOT. WE HAVE TO CATCH HER AND GET JOLAN BACK BEFORE THE XINJIN DO.

HOW? ON FOOT IN THE DESERT? WITH NO GUIDE, WE HAVE NO CHANCE. I'VE ALREADY TRIED



AND THEN, AARICIA COULDN'T FOLLOW US.

SHE'LL STAY HERE WITH VARIAY. YOUR WOMEN WILL HAVE TO FIND A PLACE TO HIDE THEM UNTIL WE GET BACK.



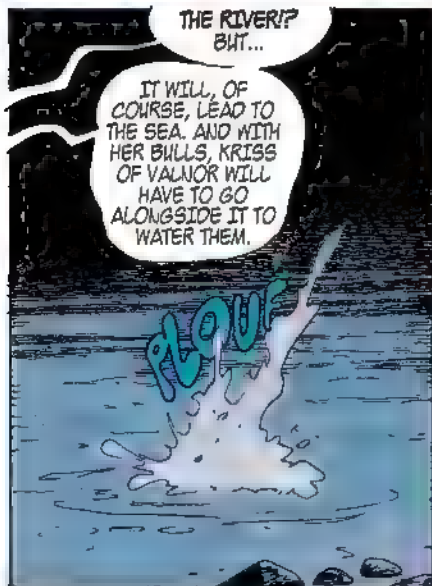
ALL RIGHT. AND WE HAVE THE WEAPONS FROM THE TWO GUARDS BUT ALL THAT DOESN'T TELL ME HOW WE'LL...

THE HOW IS IN FRONT OF YOU, TREE FOOT.



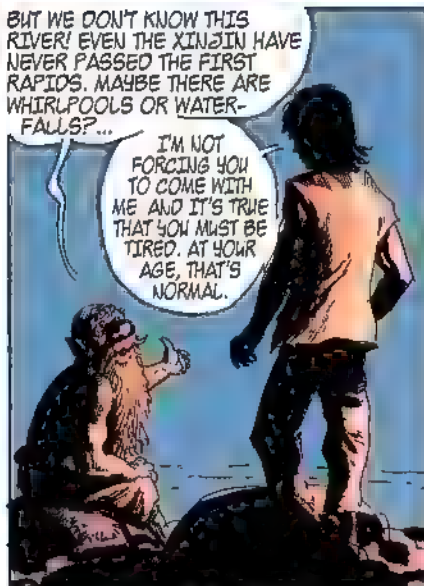
THE RIVER? BUT...

IT WILL, OF COURSE, LEAD TO THE SEA. AND WITH HER BULLS, KRISS OF VALNOR WILL HAVE TO GO ALONGSIDE IT TO WATER THEM.



BUT WE DON'T KNOW THIS RIVER! EVEN THE XINJIN HAVE NEVER PASSED THE FIRST RAPIDS. MAYBE THERE ARE WHIRLPOOLS OR WATER-FALLS?...

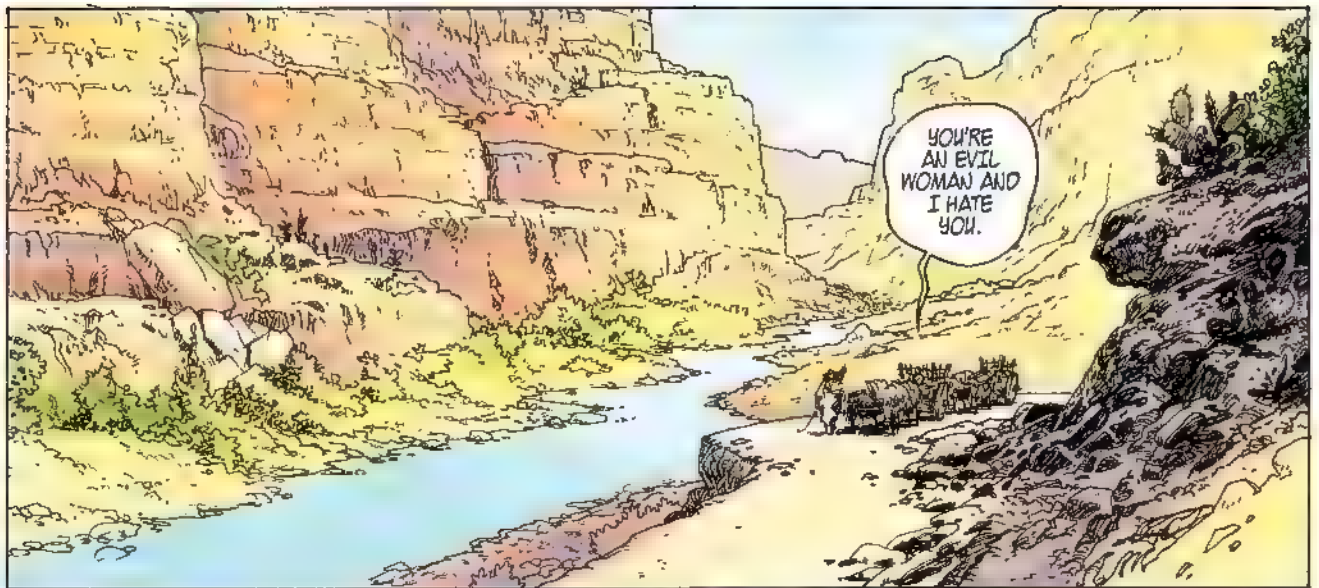
I'M NOT FORCING YOU TO COME WITH ME. AND IT'S TRUE THAT YOU MUST BE TIRED. AT YOUR AGE, THAT'S NORMAL.



TIRED? ME? WHAT ARE YOU THINKING, TENDERFOOT? WHEN DO WE LEAVE?

THE XINJIN WON'T COME OUT TO LOOK FOR US BEFORE DAWN, WHICH GIVES YOU TIME TO REST A LITTLE AND ME TIME TO GO AND STEAL A BOAT FROM THE VILLAGE. WE HAVE TO BE FAR AWAY FROM HERE WHEN THE DAY BREAKS.





YOU PROMISED TO SET THORGAL, AARICIA AND TREE FOOT FREE. NOW, BECAUSE OF YOU THEY'LL DIE.

BE QUIET OR I'LL GAG YOU.

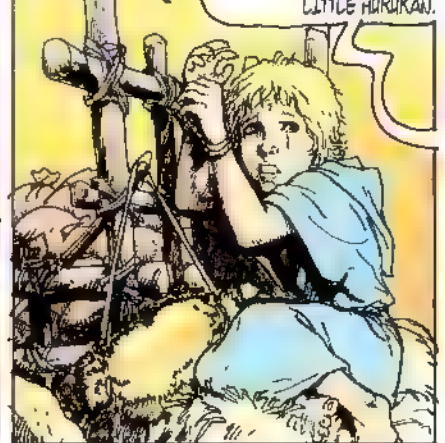


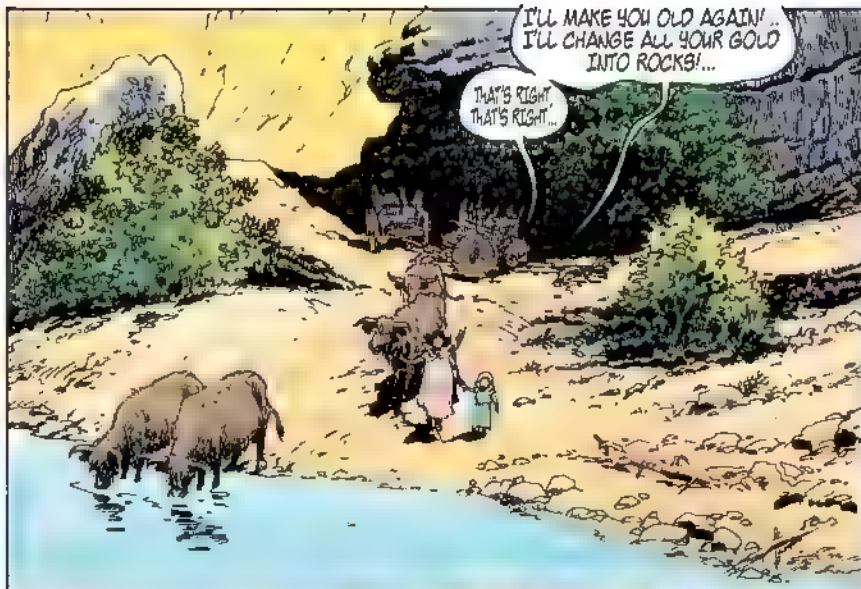
REMEMBER THAT IT'S YOUR FAULT YOUR PARENTS ARE WHERE THEY ARE. SO I DON'T SEE WHY I SHOULD RISK MY LIFE TO GET THEM OUT OF THERE.



BECAUSE... SNIFF... BECAUSE YOU PROMISED ME...

WELL, YOU WERE WRONG TO BELIEVE ME. ANYWAY, I DIDN'T HAVE THE CHOICE. YOUR BEST FRIEND WEBAC WOULDN'T HAVE EVER LET THORGAL GO, EVEN IF IT COST YOUR LIFE, MY LITTLE HURUKAN.



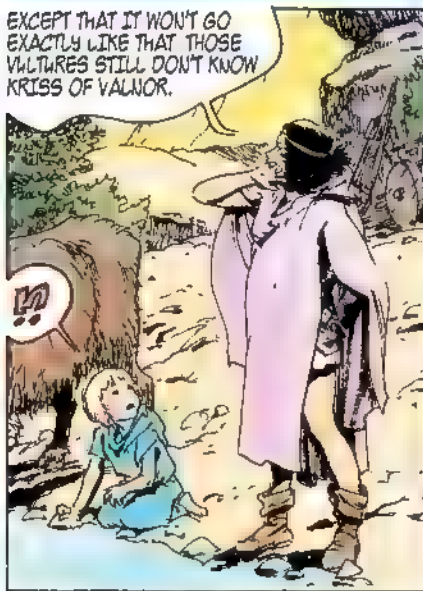
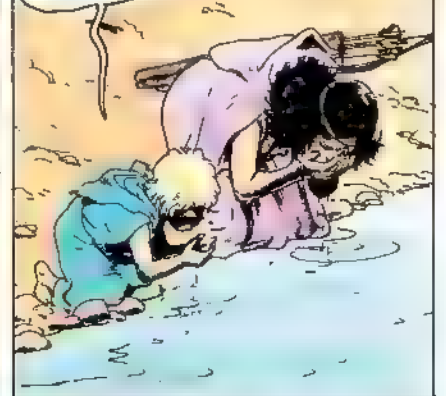


I'LL MAKE YOU OLD AGAIN!...
I'LL CHANGE ALL YOUR GOLD
INTO ROCKS!...

THAT'S RIGHT,
THAT'S RIGHT...

AND THEN, THERE ARE
STILL DAYS OF TRAVEL
TO THE SEA. YOU'LL
HAVE TO SLEEP SOME-
TIME AND THEN, THE
XINJIN FOLLOWING
US WILL KILL YOU,
AND THAT'LL BE
GREAT!

NOW THERE, I'LL ADMIT
THAT YOU SCORE A
POINT, SWEETIE...



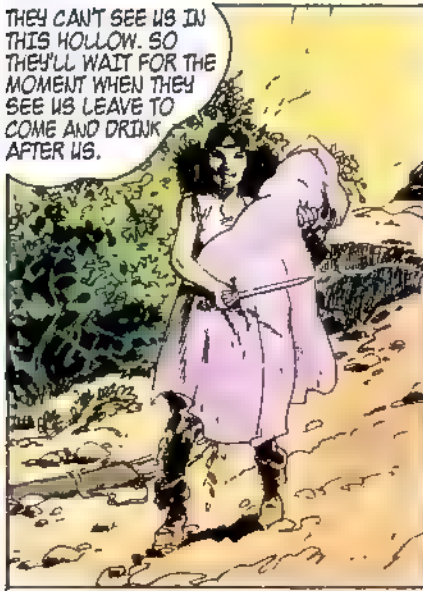
EXCEPT THAT IT WON'T GO
EXACTLY LIKE THAT THOSE
VULTURES STILL DON'T KNOW
KRISS OF VALNOR.



THESE BUSHES
WILL DO THE
JOB. WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?



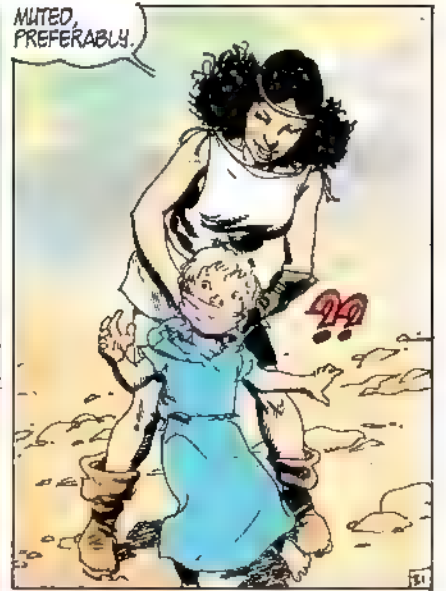
PREPARING A LITTLE
TRAP FOR YOUR FRIENDS
AND DON'T THINK ABOUT
TRYING TO RUN, YOU
WON'T GET FAR



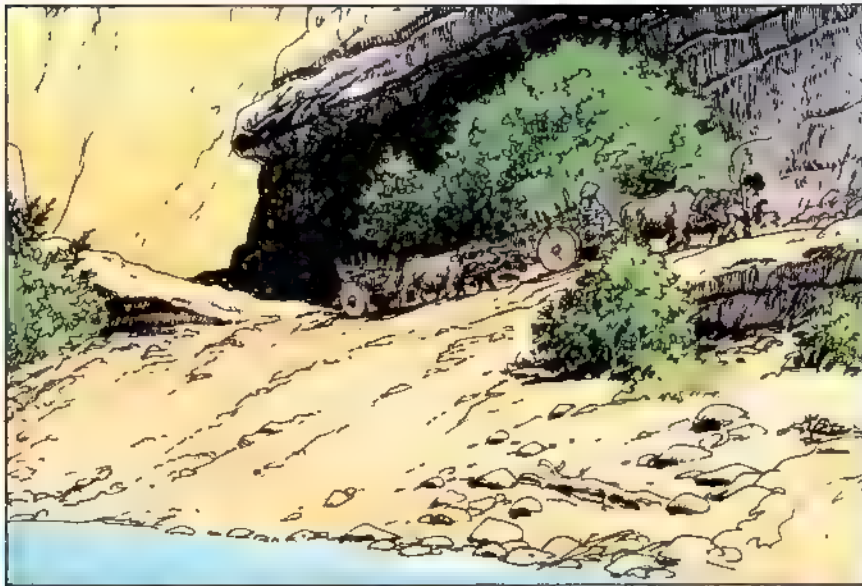
THEY CAN'T SEE US IN
THIS HOLLOW. SO
THEY'LL WAIT FOR THE
MOMENT WHEN THEY
SEE US LEAVE TO
COME AND DRINK
AFTER US.



I THINK THAT'LL DO IT. ALL
I NEED NOW, DEAR LITTLE JOLAN,
IS YOUR COOPERATION...



MUTED,
PREFERABLY.

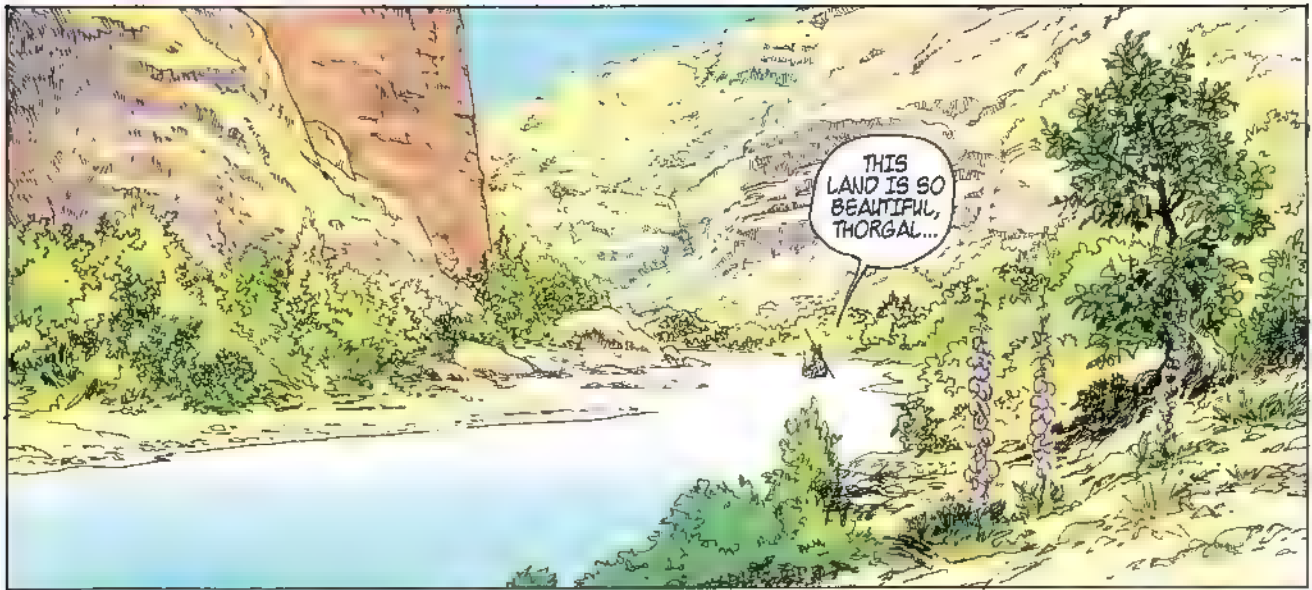


SORRY I HAD TO TIE YOU UP, BUT WITH YOUR NAUGHTY WAYS I HAVE TO EXPECT THE WORST. EVEN IF THE XINGJIN ARE NO LONGER YOUR ALLIES, I'D PREFER NOT TO TAKE ANY RISKS



NOW, MY TREASURES, COME TASTE THIS FINE RIVER'S WATER. IT'S YOUR TURN...





GRANDIOSE AND SERENE AT THE SAME TIME. OFTEN HARSH AND TOUGH TO LIVE IN, IT CREATES A HAPPINESS, STRANGELY ENOUGH. I THINK I WAS STARTING TO LIKE IT HERE.

I'D IMAGINE THAT'S ALSO THANKS TO THE TWO CHARMING INHABITANTS WHO PAMPERED YOUR TOUGH OLD BACHELOR BONES.

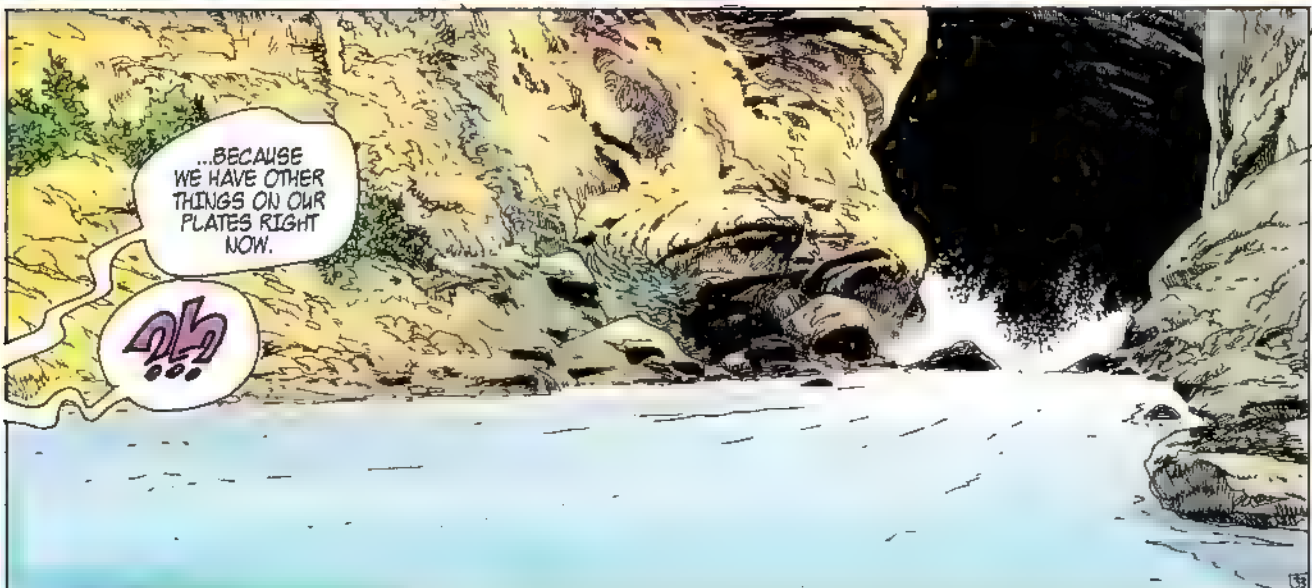


WHY DID YOU GIVE THEM SUCH FUNNY NAMES, THOUGH?

SPEHL-EGG AND EAT? BECAUSE THOSE WERE THE FIRST WORDS THEY SAID IN OUR LANGUAGE.

IT'S TRUE THAT THEY WERE KIND TO ME, THOSE LITTLE TURTLEDOVES. AND GOOD COOKS, TOO. I'LL MOST CERTAINLY MISS THEM.

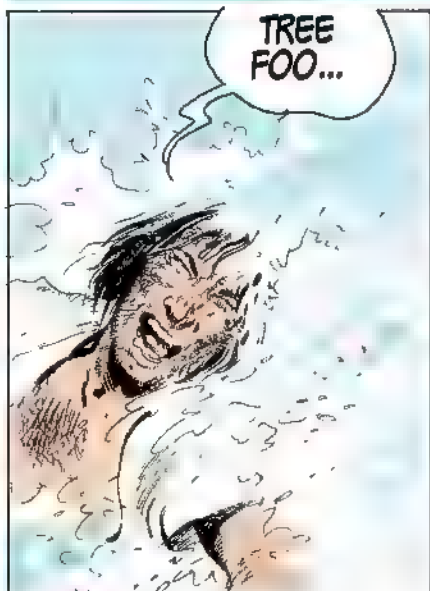
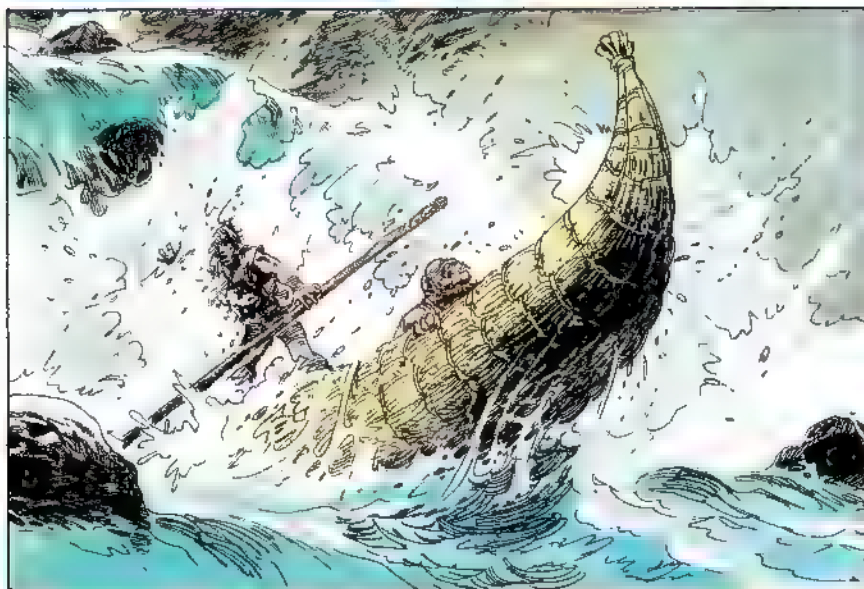
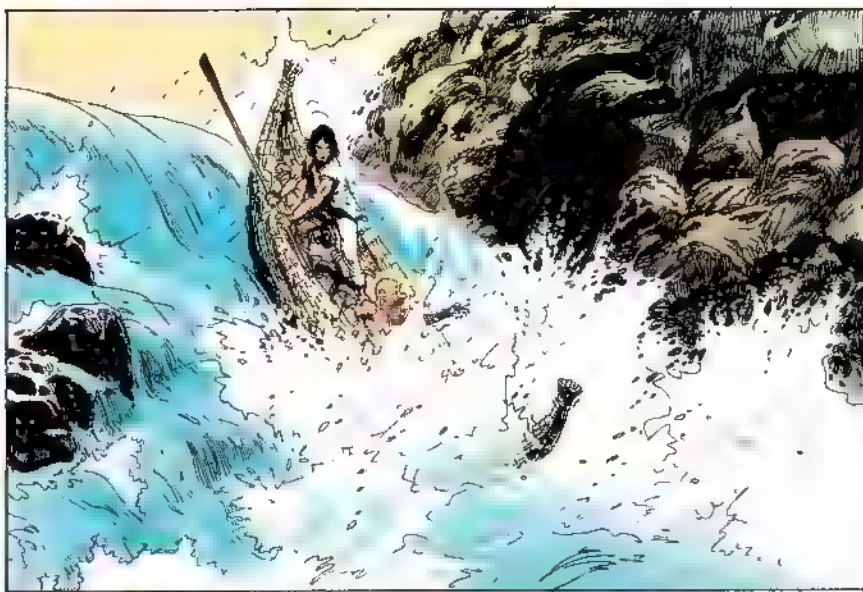
WE'LL TALK ABOUT YOUR LOVES' COOKING LATER, IF YOU DON'T MIND...



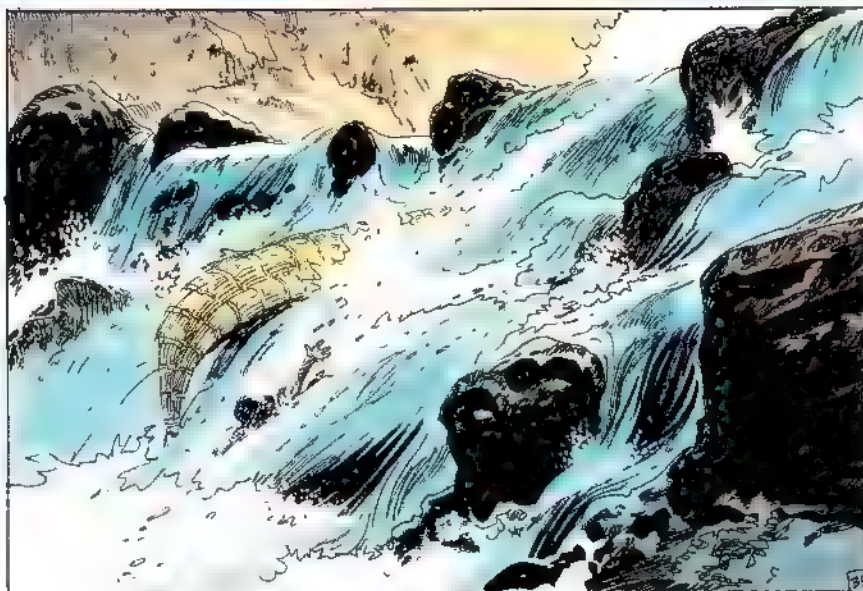
...BECAUSE WE HAVE OTHER THINGS ON OUR PLATES RIGHT NOW.

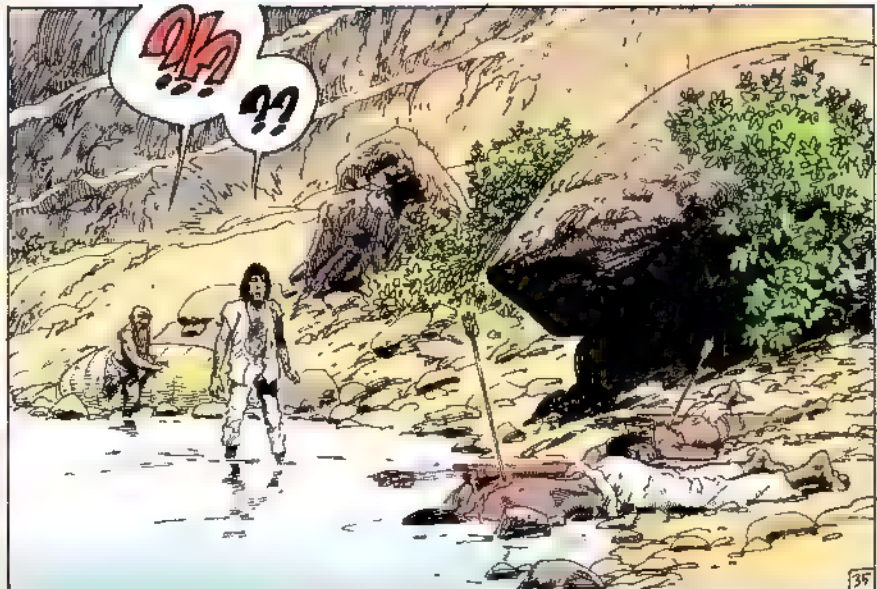
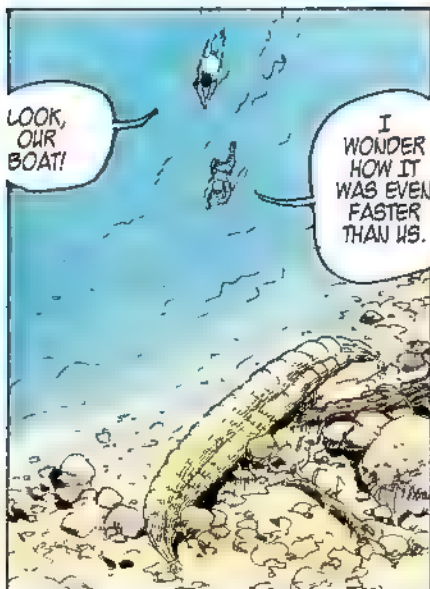
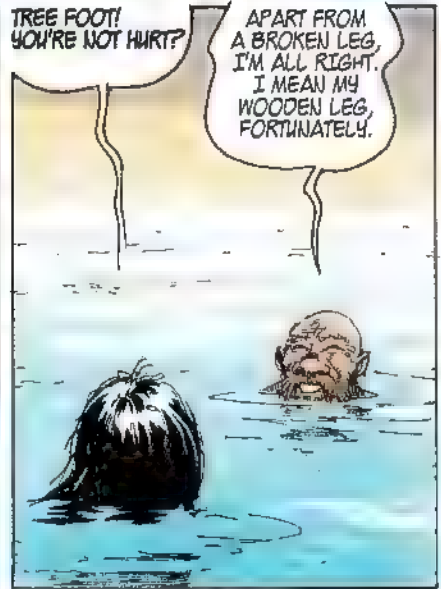
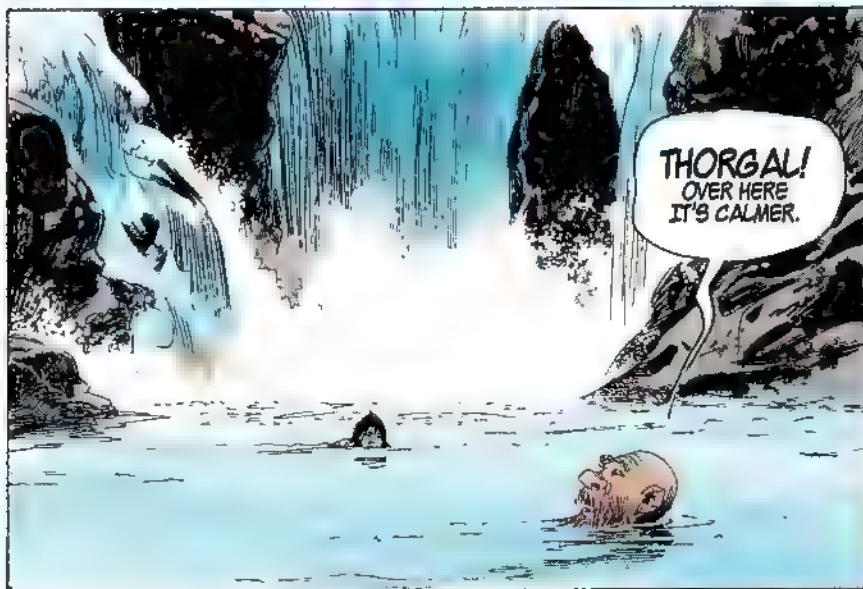
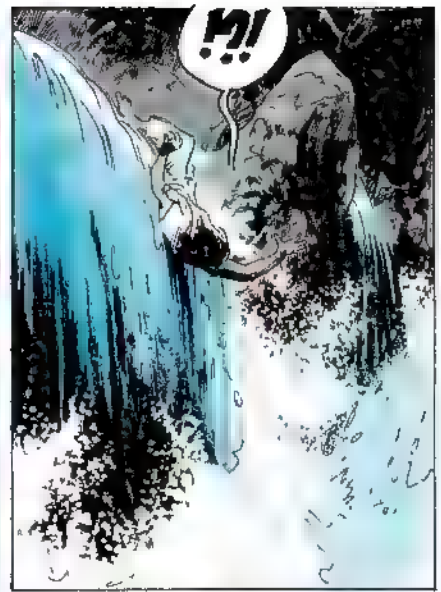
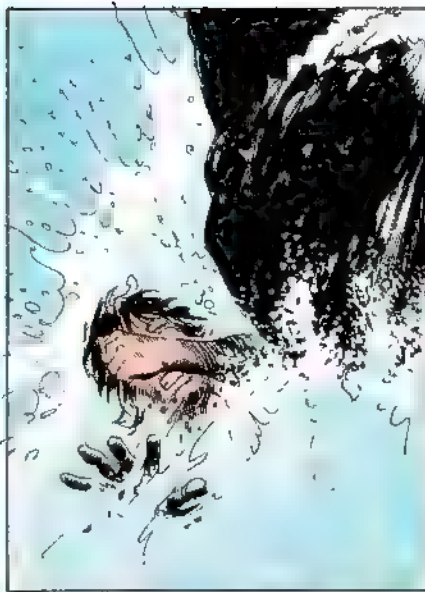
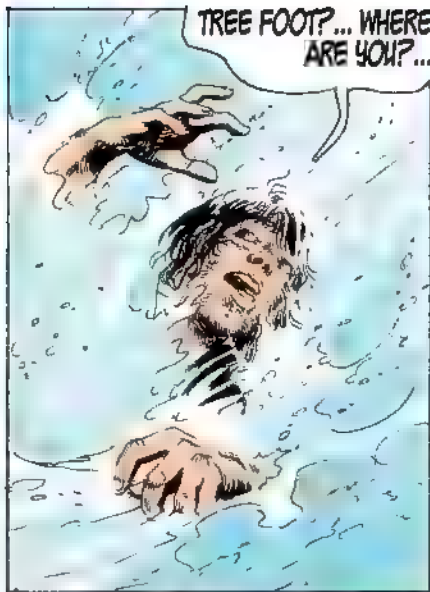
oh...

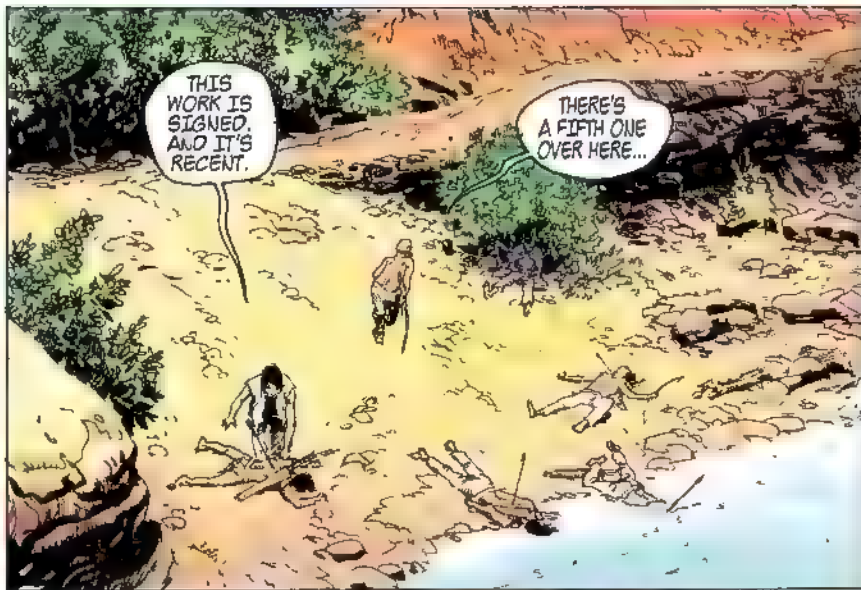
GRAB THE WEAPONS
AND HOLD ON! HERE
WE GO!...



TREE
FOO...







THIS
WORK IS
SIGNED,
AND IT'S
RECENT.

THERE'S
A FIFTH ONE
OVER HERE...



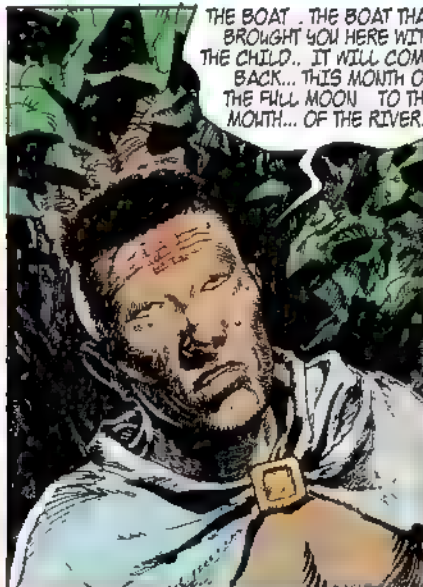
OLD
MALOC...

THORGAL... I KNEW... THAT I
SHOULD HAVE... KILLED YOU
RIGHT AWAY. BUT I'M HAPPY...
THAT YOU GOT OUT.
I'VE ALWAYS HAD
RESPECT FOR
YOU.



THAT WOMAN...
IS A DEMON...
SHE LEFT US...
NO... CHANCE...

BUT WHERE'S SHE
GOING? HOW DOES SHE
HOPE TO GET HER GOLD
TO THE GREAT SEAP?



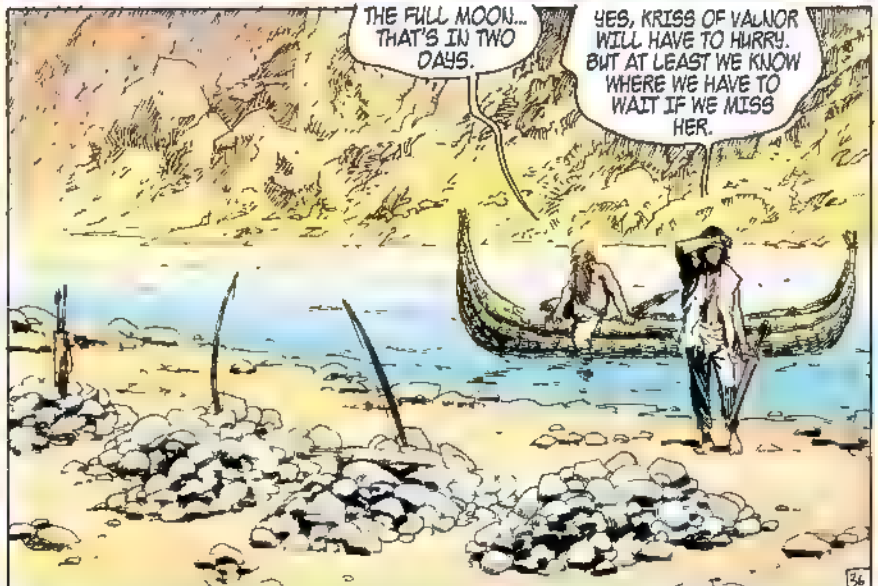
THE BOAT... THE BOAT THAT
BROUGHT YOU HERE WITH
THE CHILD... IT WILL COME
BACK... THIS MONTH ON
THE FULL MOON... TO THE
MOUTH... OF THE RIVER...



DON'T LET ME... DIE...
THORGAL... I'LL SAY... THE
TRUTH... IT'S WEABAC... WHO
WANTED TO KILL YOU... HE
ORDERED ME... TO ACCUSE
THE HIGH REGENT...
OF... OF...

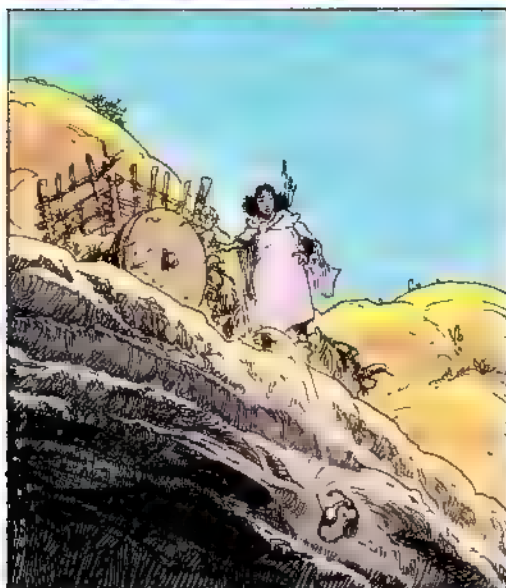
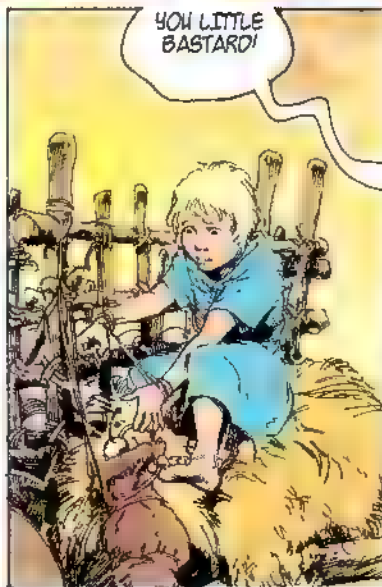
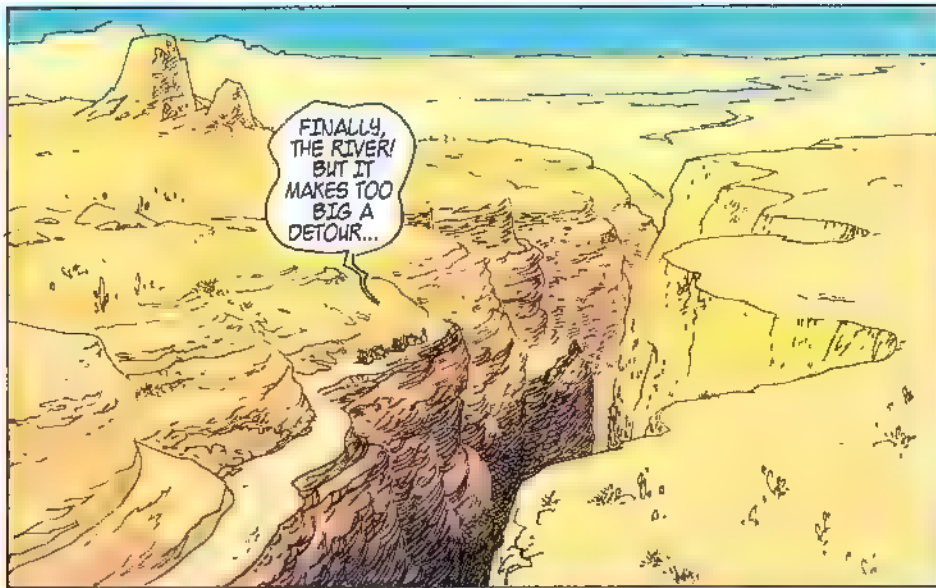


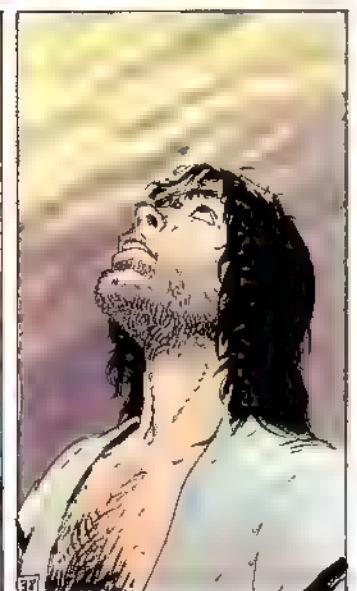
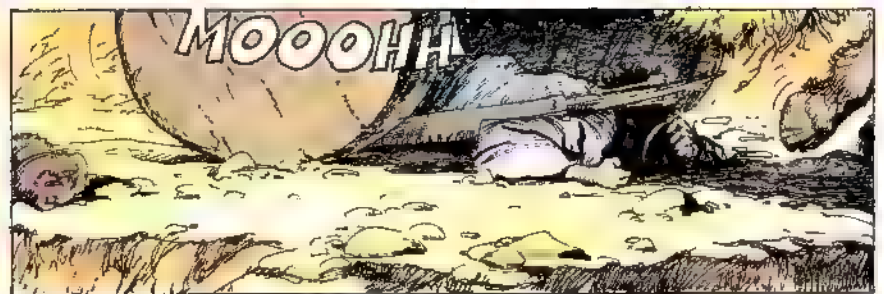
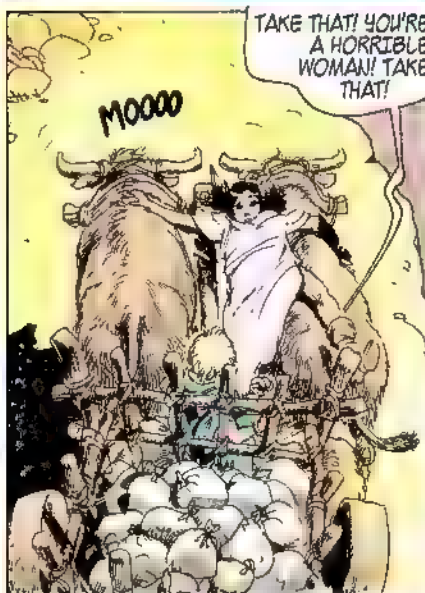
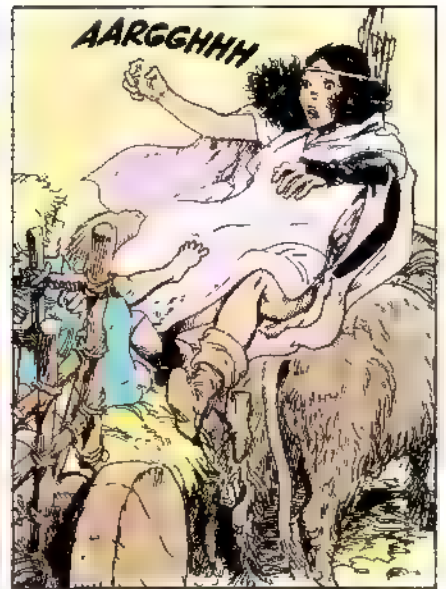
I'M AFRAID HIS
STATEMENT WON'T
BE OF MUCH USE
TO US.

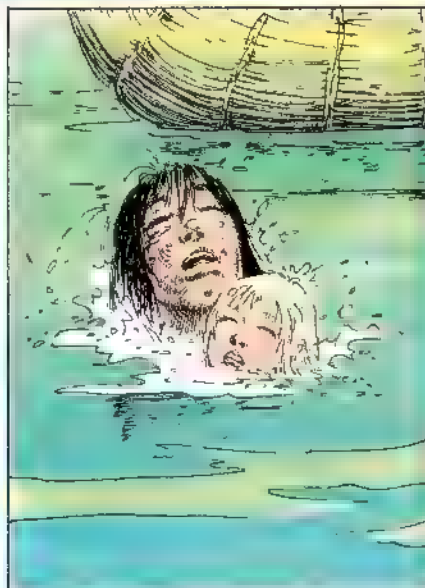
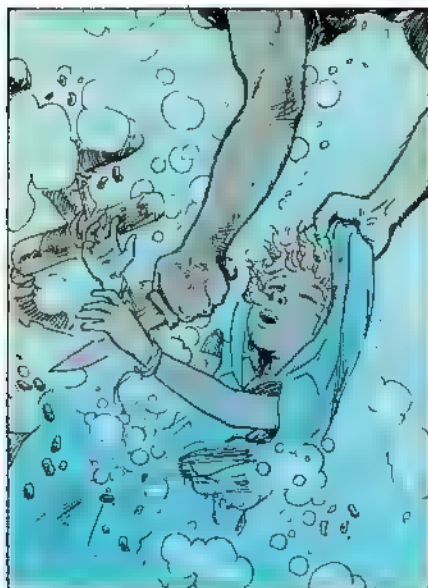
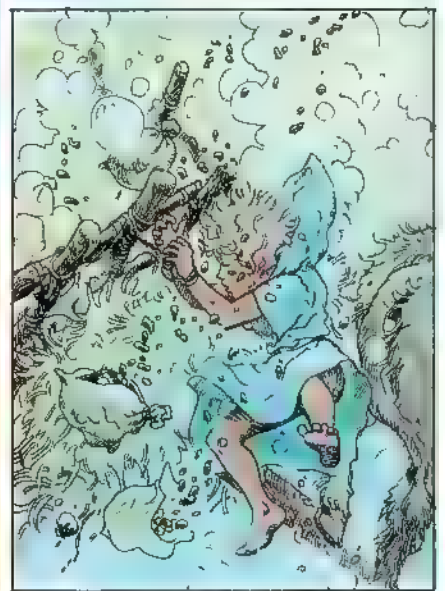
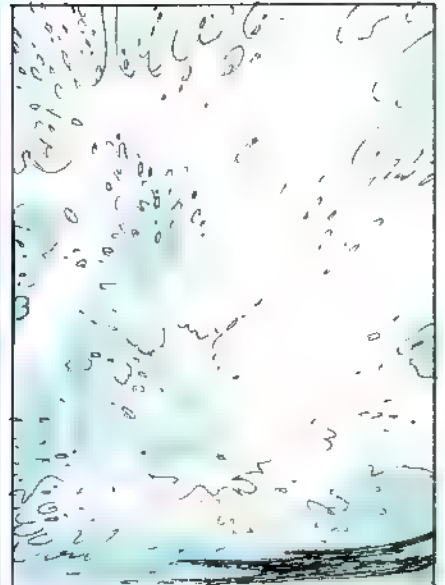
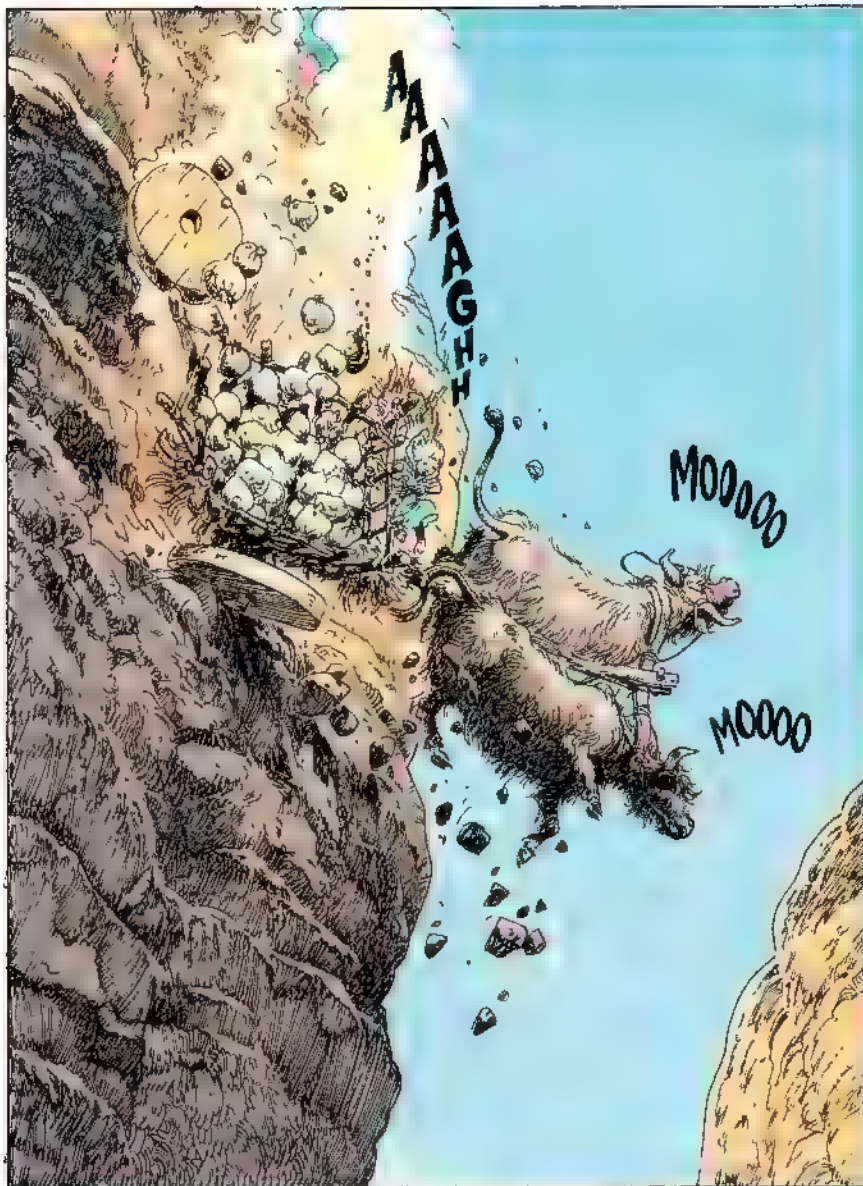


THE FULL MOON...
THAT'S IN TWO
DAYS.

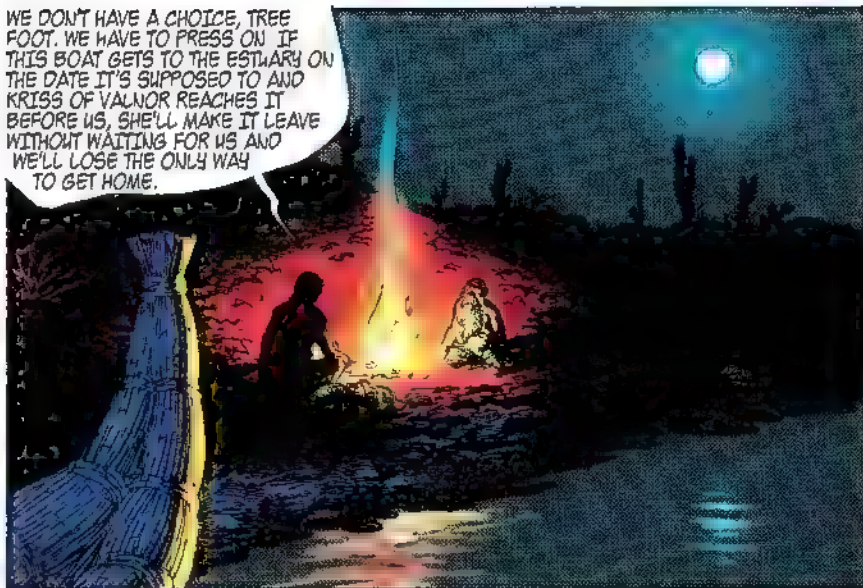
YES, KRISS OF VALNOR
WILL HAVE TO HURRY.
BUT AT LEAST WE KNOW
WHERE WE HAVE TO
WAIT IF WE MISS
HER.





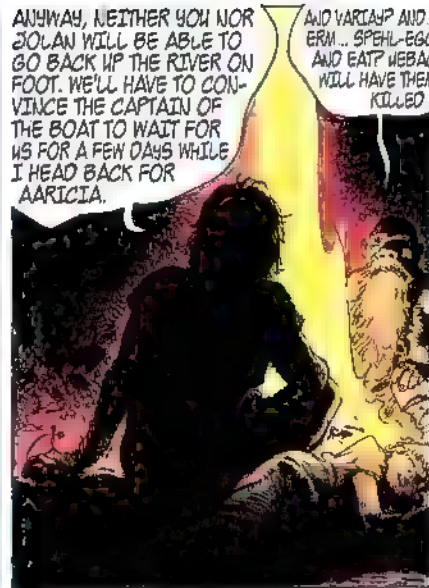


WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE, TREE FOOT. WE HAVE TO PRESS ON IF THIS BOAT GETS TO THE ESTUARY ON THE DATE IT'S SUPPOSED TO AND KRISS OF VALNOR REACHES IT BEFORE US, SHE'LL MAKE IT LEAVE WITHOUT WAITING FOR US AND WE'LL LOSE THE ONLY WAY TO GET HOME.



ANYWAY, NEITHER YOU NOR JOLAN WILL BE ABLE TO GO BACK UP THE RIVER ON FOOT. WE'LL HAVE TO CONVINCE THE CAPTAIN OF THE BOAT TO WAIT FOR US FOR A FEW DAYS WHILE I HEAD BACK FOR AARICIA.

AND VARIAP AND... ERM... SPEHL-EGG AND EAT? WEBAC WILL HAVE THEM KILLED.



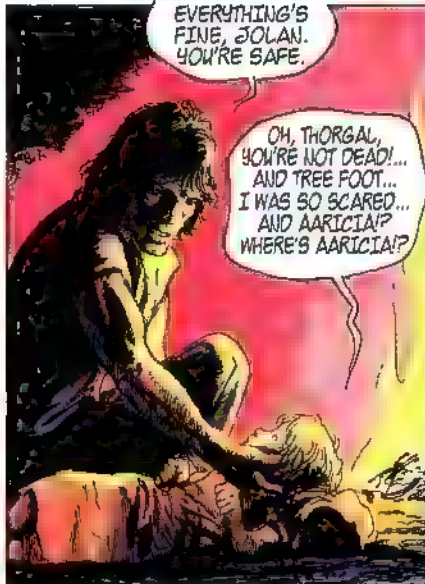
THEY COULD STILL COME WITH US... IF I MANAGE TO BRING THEM TO THE ESTUARY...



THORGAL...

EVERYTHING'S FINE, JOLAN. YOU'RE SAFE.

OH, THORGAL, YOU'RE NOT DEAD!... AND TREE FOOT... I WAS SO SCARED... AND AARICIA? WHERE'S AARICIA?



AARICIA IS SAFE TOO.

YOU KNOW, IT'S... WEBAC WHO... HE MADE ME THINK THAT YOU WERE GONE... AND THEN, I HEARD HIM... WITH MALOC... THEY WANTED TO KILL YOU TO... TO...

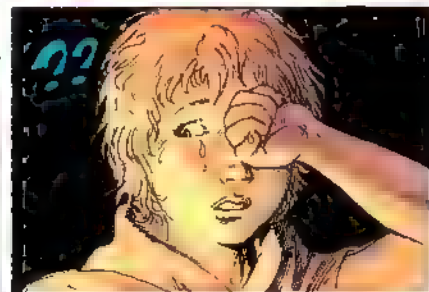


F... FORGIVE ME, THORGAL... I WAS SO MEAN... SO STUPID... I WANT TO GO HOME WITH YOU... NOW...

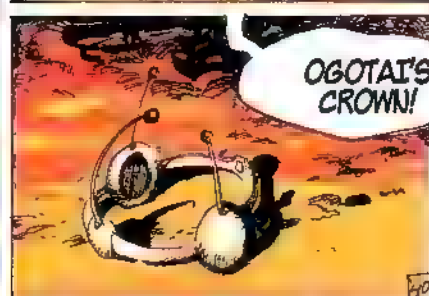


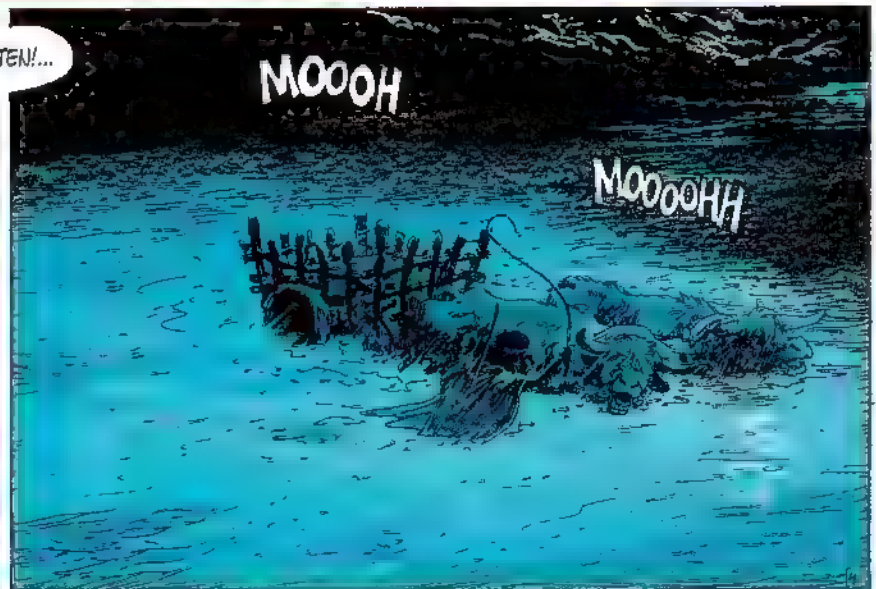
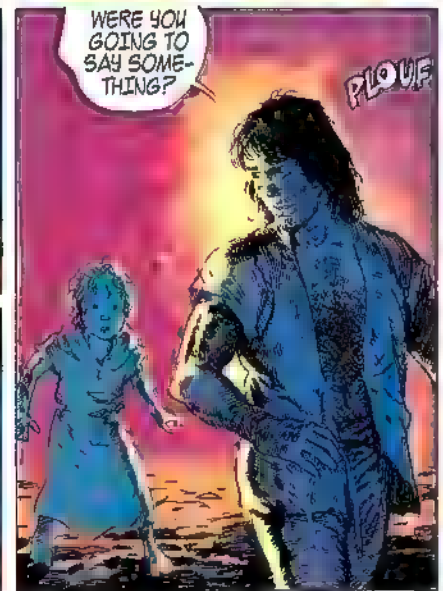
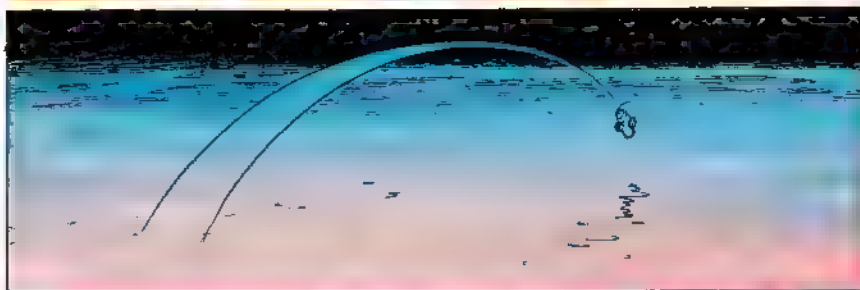
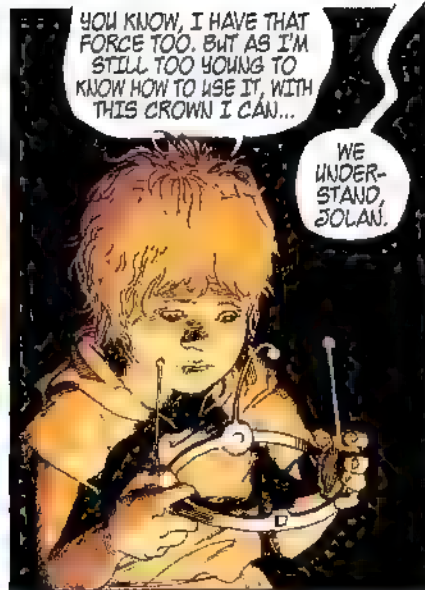
WE'LL LEAVE, JOLAN. AND WE'LL FORGET HURUKAN FOREVER.

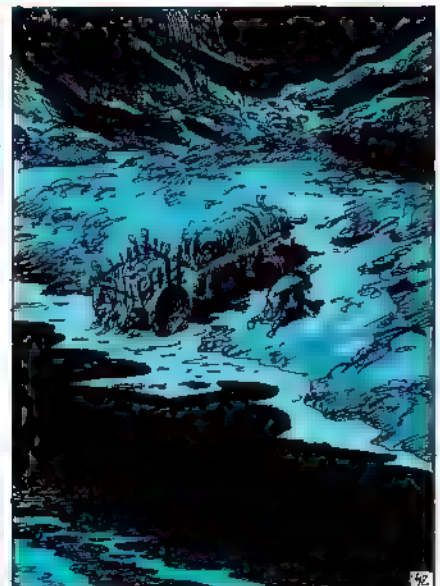
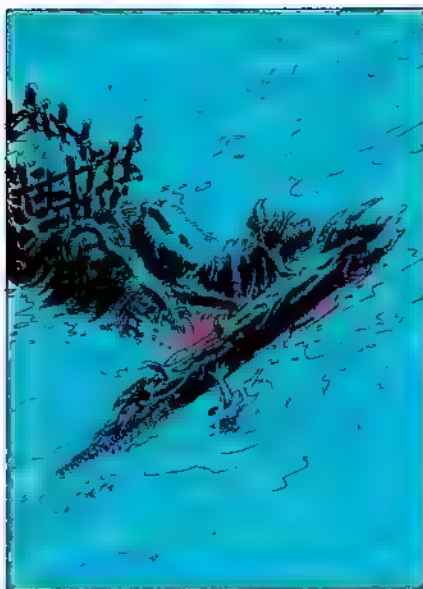
I... I PROMISE YOU THAT.

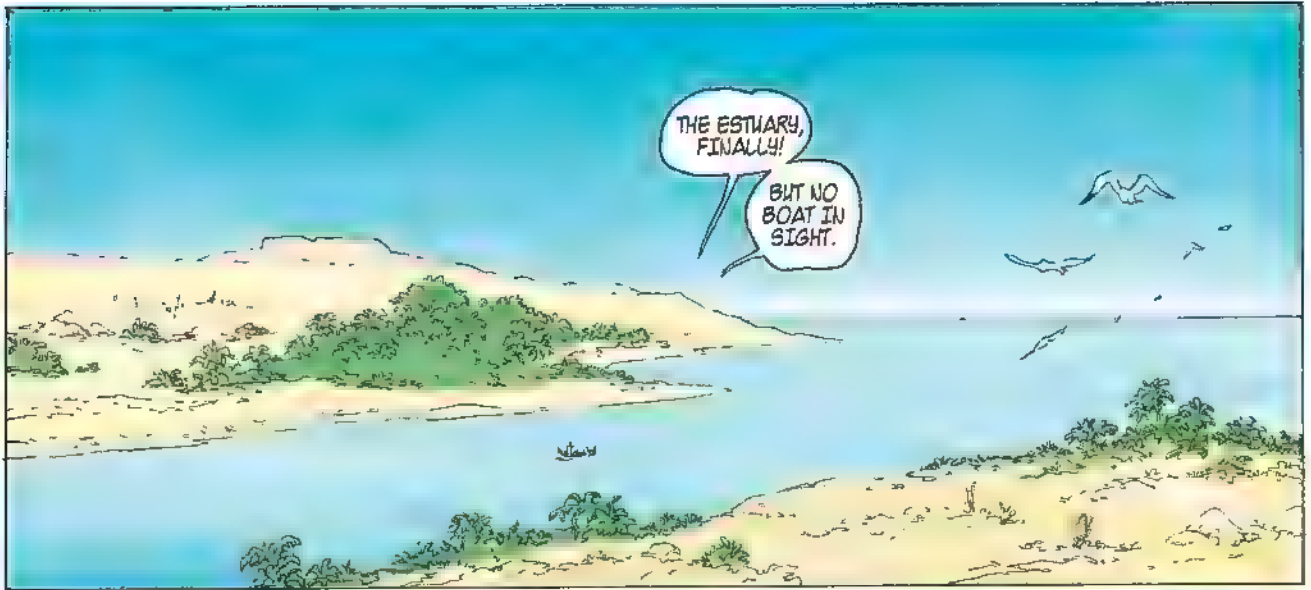


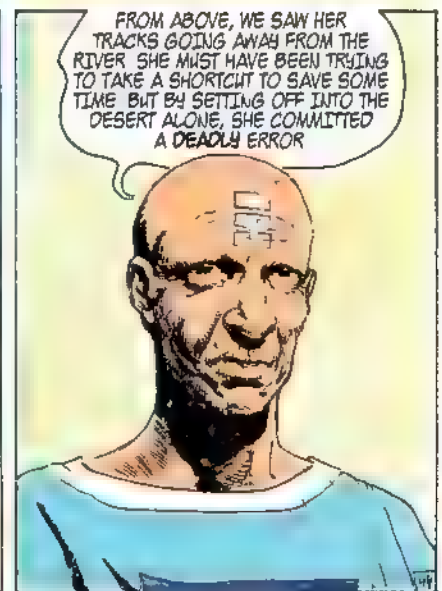
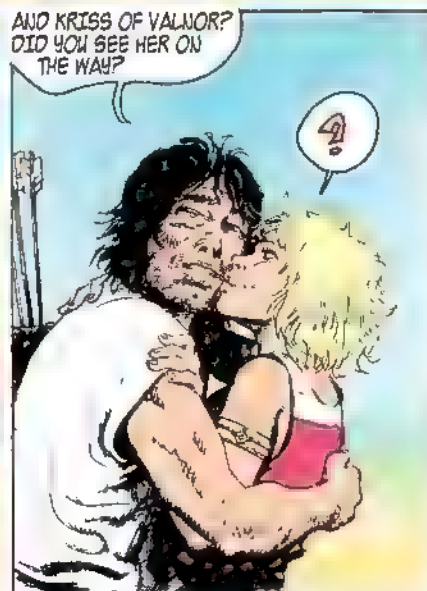
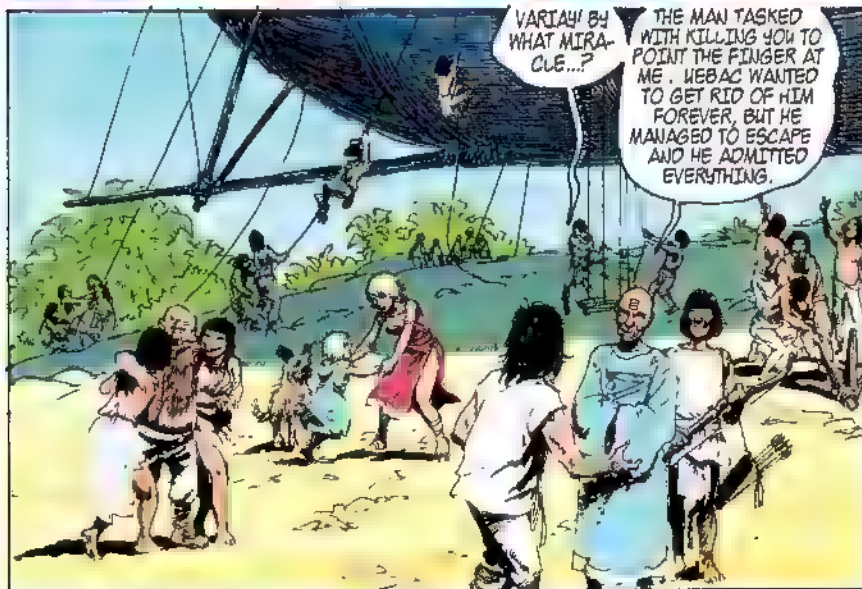
OGOTAI'S CROWN!

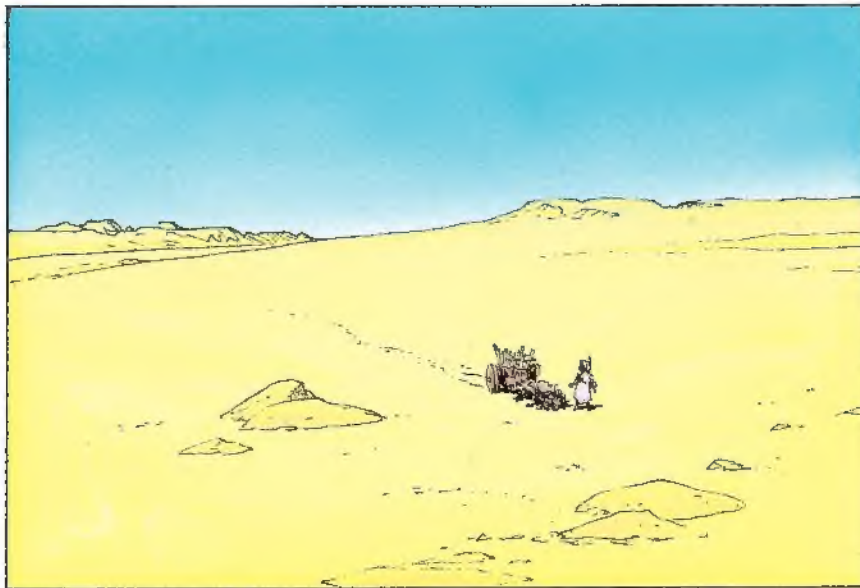












ALL THAT FOR NOTHING!
FOR NOTHING!
FOR
NOTHING!



BUT I WON'T LEAVE
MY GOLD! IT'S MINE!
I EARNED IT!



IT'S MY GOLD! IT'S
MINE! I EARNED IT! I
WANT MY GOLD!



MY GOLD...
IT'S MINE...
MY GOLD...



PERHAPS WE
SHOULD TRY
TO FIND HER?

IS THAT
REALLY
NECESSARY?

NO, THORGAL.
THE XINJIN HAVE
PAID THAT WOMAN
WHAT THEY OWED HER.
THE REST IS UP TO
THE GODS.



LOOK!





SO YOU'VE DECIDED; YOU'RE STAYING?

YES.

I LEAVE YOU MY ARMOURY, IF YOU WANT IT. WITHOUT T3ALL, THERE'S NOTHING FOR ME OVER THERE. AND HERE, THE CLIMATE IS BETTER FOR MY RHEUMATISM...

THEN GOOD LUCK, TREE FOOT. MAY THE GODS GIVE YOU A PEACEFUL HAPPINESS!



THE CLIMATE, EHP FAREWELL, YOU OLD DOG. WE'LL MISS YOU.

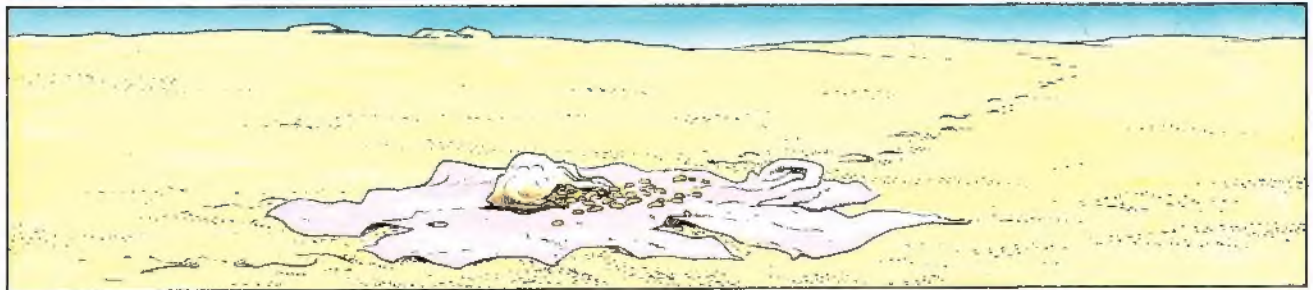


I WRONGED YOU, SOLAN. TRY NOT TO HOLD IT AGAINST ME.

I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU, VARIAY. THE XINJIN, EITHER.



ANY REGRETS, MY LOVE?



NO, NONE.

EDITHAL RYAN HANKE

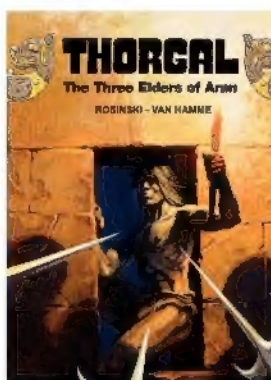
THE END

THORCAL

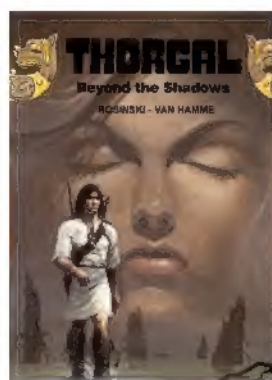
THE GODS HAVE PUT A MAN
TO THE TEST



❶ Child of the Stars
Incl. Aaricia



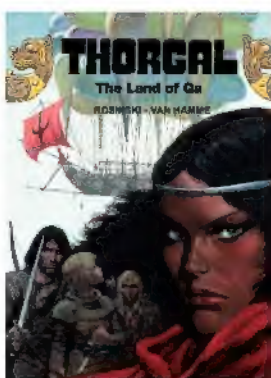
❷ The Three Elders of Aran
Incl. The Black Galley



❸ Beyond the Shadows
Incl. The Fall of Brek Zarith



❹ The Archers
Incl. Alinoe



❺ The Land of Qa
Incl. The Eyes of Tanatloc



❻ City of the Lost God
Incl. Between Earth and Sun



❼ The Master of the Mountains



❽ Wolf Cub



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Thorcal, Chninkel,
The Revenge of
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